

No 30.

5 cents.

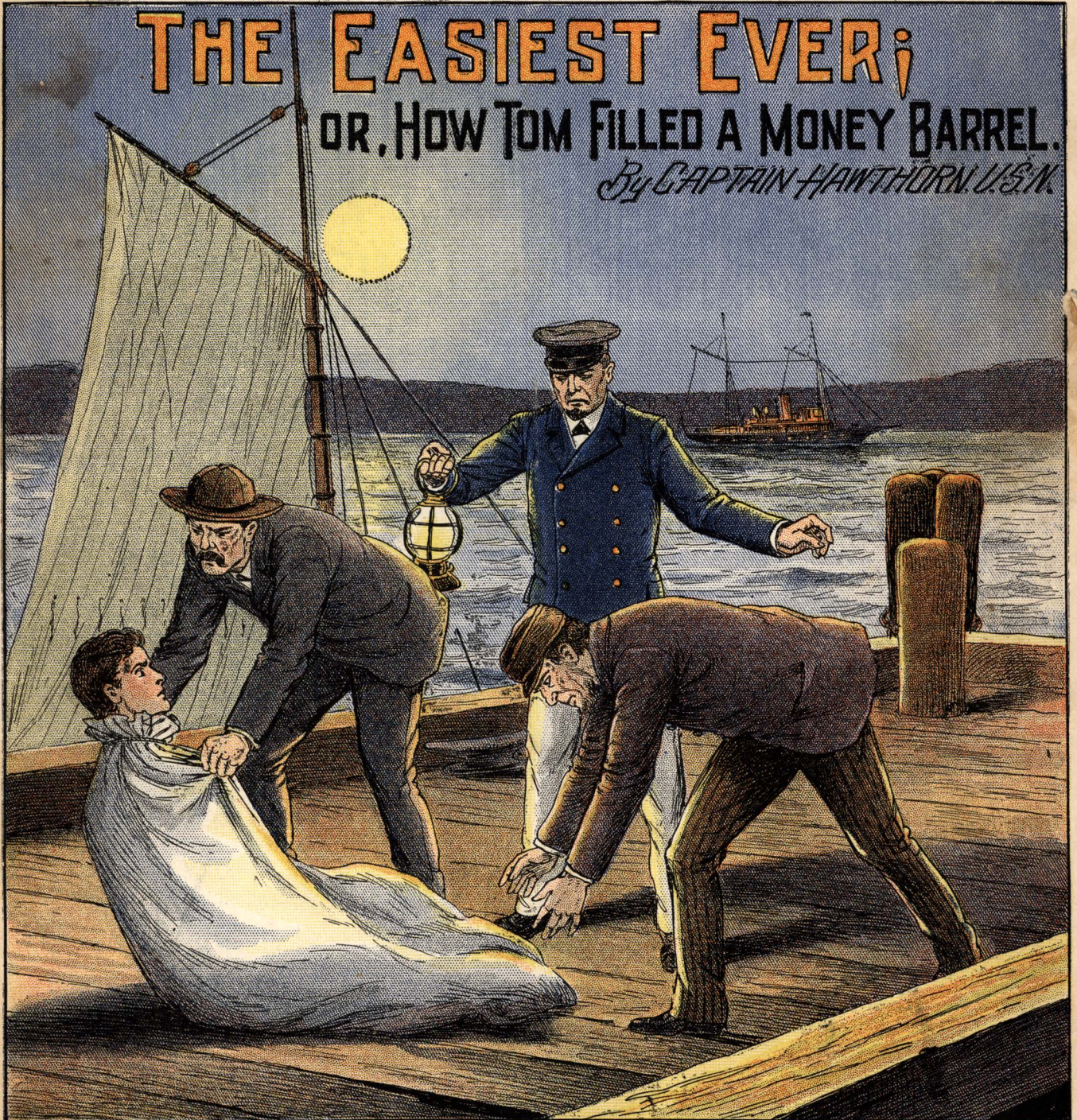
WIDE AWAKE

A COMPLETE STORY **WEEKLY.** EVERY WEEK.

THE EASIEST EVER;

OR, HOW TOM FILLED A MONEY BARREL.

By CAPTAIN HAWTHORN U.S.N.



"Up and aboard with him!" squalled Cap Grange, motioning his men to pick up Tom in the weighted sack. "When the sack rots the fish'll get him!" Tom didn't whimper, but demanded, coolly: "Is it worth while to utter a last word of straight truth?"

WIDE AWAKE WEEKLY

A COMPLETE STORY EVERY WEEK.

Issued Weekly—By Subscription \$2.50 per year. Entered according to Act of Congress, in the year 1906, in the office of the Librarian of Congress, Washington, D. C., by Frank Tousey, Publisher, 24 Union Square, New York.

No. 30.

NEW YORK, NOVEMBER 9, 1906.

PRICE 5 CENTS.

The Easiest Ever

OR,

HOW TOM FILLED A MONEY BARREL

By **CAPTAIN HAWTHORN, U. S. N.**

CHAPTER I.

SHOESTRING TOM.

"When you say any one can be rich if he wants to, that's all rot," grumbled Bill Simmons.

"He can, if he really wants to," declared Tom Radcliffe, stoutly.

"Well, my pop is a poor man, but he has always wanted to be rich," cited Bill, triumphantly.

"He didn't want it hard enough," claimed Tom.

"Then I don't know what you mean by wanting a thing hard enough," challenged Bill.

"Neither does your father," laughed Tom, lightly.

"Oh, now, see here, smarty," defied Simmons, "if you know all about getting rich, tell us just how it's done."

"Sure," agreed Tom. "But telling you won't make you rich."

"Nor you, either."

Ted Denton, Tom's chum, was the third boy on this morning bicycle trip.

Ted had listened, so far, without advancing any opinion of his own.

But now Tom turned to him, saying:

"Ted, you must have some idea on this subject of getting rich."

"Of course I have."

"Then let's have it."

"Getting rich ain't worth the trouble," Ted declared solemnly.

"Huh!" grunted Bill. "Ain't it, though?"

"No, it isn't," Ted insisted. "It is just as Tom says. Any one can get rich who really wants to."

"Then why ain't it worth the trouble?" demanded Bill.

"Because one who means to make himself rich must give up every other idea in life. He must think of money, money, money, all day long, and every time in the night that he wakes up. He must give up pleasure, because that would take his thoughts off the game of getting money. He must just live for money and nothing else."

"Well," insisted Bill Simmons, "why isn't it worth while to get money even in that way?"

"Because," returned Ted, who was a good deal of a philosopher, "a fellow is a creature of habit. You let him give every one of his thoughts for years to the making and piling up of money, and let him make his fortune at the game. By that time it has become a habit with him to think of nothing but making money. Any pleasure means merely a way of getting rid of money, not of making it. Take any fellow who has grubbed all his life until he has got a fortune together, and what then? In every case that fellow is so wedded to making money that he doesn't know how to get the enjoyment out of it that other folks do."

"There's a good deal of truth in that," agreed Simmons.

"The only way a fellow can get rich nowadays is by being mean, and grubbing, and grabbing, and cheating your neighbors out of every dollar you can. Take old Josh Darby, for instance."

"Yes," nodded Ted. "He was a poor man, and now he's worth a quarter of a million. But he has spent his whole life at the game of getting money. It's a habit with him now, and he don't want to break off, and wouldn't know how to take pleasure. Any poor man in town has a better time. And old Darby will leave his pile to that worthless dude son, Fred, who'll blow in the whole pile inside of five years."

"So you see," uttered Bill, turning to Tom Radcliffe, "you can't hope to be rich unless you're ready to be mean all the time and never have any fun."

"I've been listening to the two of you," smiled Tom. "You've both of you got it partly right, and you're both partly wrong."

"You think a fellow can get rich and get pleasure out of life as he goes along?" Ted questioned.

"Yes, if he makes his money quick, in big piles."

"Oh!" uttered Ted, doubtfully.

"Only the stupid man puts his fortune together dollar by dollar," Tom went on earnestly. "He does it that way because he doesn't know any better. Now, I'm going to be rich in a few years, and I'm going to fill a barrel with it, and quit before I've lost the trick of having fun."

"Big words," sneered Bill.

"Wait!" advised Tom, coolly. "Wait and see if I don't have a pile soon after I'm twenty-one."

"You've almost four years to wait," laughed Ted, teasingly.

"That's so," Tom admitted, more soberly. "I may have to get my pile before then. For I want a barrel of money, and I want it so badly that I mean to get it."

"Ho! ho! ho!" laughed Bill, gruffly.

But Ted Denton, looking at the fine, handsome, serious face of his chum, murmured to himself:

"It wouldn't be such a wonder, after all, if Tom was rich in three or four years more. He's after money just now. Now, I never knew Tom to miss anything else he went after. I'm betting he gets the money barrel, and gets it quick!"

It was one of the perfect mornings that are so common in the latter part of June.

School had closed but a few days before.

Ted was going to keep on until he had gone through the high school.

Bill, who preferred work, was already looking for a job.

Tom wanted to go at least another year to the high school, but it was doubtful whether the family funds would permit.

Tom's family consisted of his mother, his baby sister, Elsie, aged four, and himself.

Tom's father, who had died nearly four years ago, at the age of thirty-five, had been one of those quick money-getters, who had retired at the age of thirty with a hundred thousand dollars, which he and his young wife had agreed was all they would ever need.

The Radcliffes had owned a very pretty home in this seashore village of Greenport.

But Mrs. Radcliffe, when left a widow, and ignorant of the handling of money, had fallen victim to a rascally lawyer, who had gotten away to other parts with all her available funds.

Old Josh Darby, trading on the widow's necessities, had bought her home at a ridiculously low price.

Darby himself now lived in that pretty home.

Mrs. Radcliffe had bought a tiny cottage, a small stable and an acre and a half of ground for twelve hundred dollars.

The rest of what money she had left from the sale of her former home the scared widow had put away in savings banks.

With care, she figured that there was enough money to put her boy through the high school.

After that Tom should be capable of supporting her and his little sister.

And Tom Radcliffe was just the kind of boy who could be depended upon to do the best possible for his mother.

He wanted to go through high school, which would take another year yet, but now the family funds amounted to about two hundred dollars.

Tom, not the one to take his mother's last bit of hoard, had sighed and admitted that he must look about at once for work.

First of all, though, he was taking a few days to think it over.

"Dad used to make his money in quick bunches," murmured the boy. "I don't see why I can't. I must have some of his brains. If I could pull in even two or three hundred dollars, it would make enough to get me through the next year at school."

He had come out for this morning's ride with a view to being all day in the open air, in quick motion. While on this ride he wanted to plan the future.

First of all, very early in the morning, he had ridden around the bay road in order to get a look at the great house and handsome estate of Digby Crane, a middle-aged man, and the only tremendously wealthy resident of Greenport.

There had been a great flutter of excitement, ten years before, when Digby Crane moved out of Greenport and bought two farms on the bayshore. These he had turned into a handsome estate, where he spent most of his time.

For two years after that there had been a smothered boom in Greenport real estate. The families that owned the farms bordering on the bay had expected that other wealthy people would move out in Crane's wake and buy more farms to convert into beautiful estates.

So for two years farm land on the bay-front at Greenport had been held at absurdly high prices.

Then, as no one came to buy, the farmers settled down in the belief that Greenport real estate wasn't going to soar, after all.

So these same farmers settled down to the hard problem of extracting a living out of none too fertile farms that were swept by breezes straight off the Atlantic Ocean.

Tom, in passing the entrance to the Crane estate early that morning, had noticed something to which few others would have paid attention.

Two surveyors, attended by two chain-men, had left the entrance, after Mr. Crane had said, in smiling warning:

"Gentlemen, I shall expect you to return by four o'clock. Remember, the summer-house. And bring all the data."

"You know us well enough, Mr. Crane, to know that you can depend upon us," replied one of the surveyors.

That much had set Tom to thinking.

Almost instinctively he had turned down roads from which he could watch the progress of the surveyors and their men, and the wagon in which they carried most of their surveying outfit.

It was while so watching these surveyors that Tom had fallen in with Ted Denton and Bill Simmons.

For two hours curious Tom had kept these surveyors in sight.

Even now, with his friends, he managed to keep the route of their ride close to the shore.

"Those surveyor chaps are working from farm to farm along the bay shore," Tom murmured. "They don't go inland at all. I wonder if the farmers are as curious as I am?"

For one thing, our hero had already discovered that whenever the surveyors reached a farmhouse they stopped, either to explain or to ask permission to cross the land.

Now, the three youngsters had just reached the top of Higgins' Hill, an elevated bit of land that looked down upon the bay and across to the broad ocean beyond.

On this hill were the home and outbuildings of Silas Higgins, a none too well-to-do farmer.

It was not a very productive farm that Higgins operated, yet it needed fertilizer and "elbow-grease" more than it needed anything else.

The surveyors by this time were down in the hollow below, but working up toward Higgins' place.

Silas himself sat out by the well, smoking and enjoying the sun.

That was what he was really there for, though, by way of pretense, the shiftless farmer had a harness across his lap that he seemed to be mending.

"Fellows," announced Tom, suddenly, "I'm a bit tired and mighty thirsty. I'm going in and ask Sile for a drink of his well water. Then, if he has no objections, I guess I'll lie under that apple tree for a few minutes and get my ginger back."

"Whew!" laughed Ted. "It's something new for you, Tom, to be talking of being tired out. I can't remember ever to have heard you admit as much before."

"Oh, just call it lazy, then, if you like," smiled Tom. "But it looks tempting under that old apple tree by the well."

So in at the gate they rode, and good-natured old Sile, looking up, nodded.

"Howdy, boys? Fine day we're having."

"We want to make it finer, Mr. Higgins, by having a drink of that fine well water."

"Sure, boys! Help yourselves."

Which all three proceeded to do; and then Silas, glad that hospitality gave him an excuse for dropping even the very easy work that he was doing, laid the harness on the ground, refilled his pipe, and got ready to talk.

"Tom's been telling us something interesting," grimaced Bill, as he threw himself down on the cool grass. "He tells us that any one who wants can be rich and can gather in the money in bunches."

"I must 'a' lost the receipt, then," sighed Silas. "I have all I can do making money enough to keep up with the tax collector."

"Tom says any fool can do it," Bill persisted.

"Oh," exclaimed Silas, his face lighting up. "That explains why I'm not rich. I'm no fool. But, seriously, boys, the day has gone by when a feller can make money unless he has a lot to start with. That's the trouble. Them as has, gits. Them as hasn't can't even git no kind of a hold, nohow."

"Oh, capital ain't always needed at the start," argued Tom. "Every day, somewhere, some fellow gets a bunch who had nothing but a shoestring to start on."

"A shoestring?" sniffed Bill.

"A shoestring," explained Tom, "is another name for 'shadow capital.' When a fellow has just enough money to put on a bare front, without any capital to back the bluff up, they say he's training on a shoestring."

"And you really believe a fellow can win out on a shoestring capital?" demanded Bill, unbelievably.

"Why, fellows do it every day."

"And you'll do it?" persisted Simmons.

"Yes, sir! I ought to do it as well as any one else."

"Shoestring Tom!" chuckled Bill.

"Oh, wait and see, Simmons," broke in Ted Denton, quietly. "We don't know everything. For my part, I believe Tom can make a pile on a shoestring if he sets out to. He does everything else that he makes up his mind to."

"Can't make money fast without a lot o' money to back ye, nohow," insisted Silas Higgins.

He looked at the harness, as if afraid he would have to pick it up again and resume the pretense of work.

But just at this moment wheels sounded by the gate. The surveyor's party had arrived.

There were four men in the wagon, the two surveyors on the front seat and their two chain-men on the back seat.

They came up close to the well before they stopped the horse.

"Good morning, sir," hailed the driver. "You the owner here?"

"Reckon I be, until next taxes fall due," grinned Silas.

"We're going over the State survey lines. Thought we'd drop in to let you know, so you wouldn't be surprised at seeing us tramp over your land."

"State surveyors, be you?" asked Silas, with interest.

"Yes; going over the old State survey lines."

"It's all right," nodded Silas, grinning, "as long as you don't change the lines so as to do me out of my farm."

"Oh, I guess we won't do that," laughed the surveyor who had done the talking. "May we hitch the horse here?"

Tom was watching them through half-closed eyes.

"Certainly."

In two minutes more the surveyors had tramped away.

"Now, why do these men have to lie, and say they're State surveyors, when they're doing some sort of a job for Digby Crane?" Tom asked himself, suspiciously. "There's always some queer game up when men have to lie about what they're doing. That's a good truth to tie to. What's their game? What's Digby Crane's game, for that matter? Digby Crane owns an estate at the south end of the bay. These men are just surveying right around the bay. What does it mean?"

Tom's brain was moving fast.

To his knowledge, these surveyors had already surveyed, that morning, across the farms of seven out of the eleven men who owned all of the bay front except the Crane estate.

"Crane has half a dozen men visiting him now. Folks say they're all club friends of Crane, up in the city. Men who can belong to the same club that Crane does must be rich. Are they interested in this survey? Gracious!"

The idea struck Tom Radcliffe so quickly that it stung him.

He bounded up from the ground, leaping up into the air, forgetful of the others around him.

"What's the matter, Tom?" demanded Bill Simmons, in amazement. "Hornets?"

Tom, recalled to himself, rubbed one of his legs vigorously.

"I don't know what it was," he replied.

That set Bill to exploring, with great interest, the ground where our hero had been lying.

But Tom in the meantime was thinking, with a thrilling throb of discovery:

"Great Scott! The expected boom is about to strike Greenport! Digby Crane's friends are planning to buy up the whole bay frontage and convert it into swell estates like Crane's place."

Tom fairly tingled with this discovery. For a discovery it was, he was sure.

"What good does it do me, though, to know it?" he asked himself, more soberly, a moment later, as he walked away from his companions. "If I had the capital I might buy in here on the bay, but I haven't got the capital. It looks as if Sile was right, that it takes money to get money. A shoestring? But I haven't even got the shoestring!"

That didn't stop his mind running riot, though.

"I've got to get away and think. There must be a way," he muttered, going toward his wheel.

"Where now?" asked Ted, following him.

Bill, too, was rising, for Tom was always the leader among the boys.

"Ted!" whispered our hero, desperately.

"Well, old chap?"

"Get Bill away somehow! Clear out with him!"

Ted was much too used to his chum to be offended.

"Got something you want to do, eh?" he whispered.

"Yes; I've just remembered it," Tom half-lied. "Get Bill away somehow."

"All right," clicked Ted. "Shall we go back to town?"

"Yes, yes."

"Bill," remarked Ted, casually, as the other boy came up, "you and I'll start along now. Tom'll overtake us as soon as he looks his wheel over."

Bill grunted and mounted, Ted riding away in his wake.

As soon as he had seen them started, Tom mounted and rode up over the hill in the opposite direction.

He did not go far, however, only to a clump of bushes, behind which he was able to trundle his wheel. From there he watched, unobserved, the surveyors on the farm below.

"Yes, sir!" throbbed the boy. "That's what they're doing—just surveying straight on around the bay. And that confounded lie about State surveyors. Then they'll go back to that meeting in the summer-house on Crane's place at four o'clock this afternoon. I wonder why I couldn't get in, close to that summer-house, and learn what's up?"

For a few moments Tom pondered over this new idea.

It seemed daring, almost impossible, at first.

But the longer he thought about it the more likely it seemed that he could do such a thing.

"By crackey!" he cried at last. "I will be there! I'll find out. And if there's anything in it I'll make my pile. By thunder, I'll be just what Bill called me—'Shoestring Tom!'"

CHAPTER II.

THE DREAM GROWS.

"Why, Tom, my boy, what ails you?"

Mrs. Radcliffe put that question as Tom stared at his noonday meal instead of eating it.

"Nothing, mother," he replied, coming back to himself, and picking up knife and fork.

"Don't you like your dinner?" his mother asked anxiously.

"Why, yes, mother!" he tried to answer heartily, but his mind getting away again.

"It was really the best I could afford, Tom, dear," his mother went on, with a little break in her voice.

"Why, mother, it's fit for a—shoestring!" he blurted out, his mind between two points.

"What's that?" gasped his mother.

"Why, I—oh, confound it! My mind is between two subjects."

"Oh, there's something on your mind, is there?" asked his mother, smiling a little. "I thought you didn't like your dinner."

"Why, the dinner's good enough for a king. A king would be lucky to have as good a dinner. Wouldn't he, Elsie?"—turning to his baby sister.

"I wish there was pudding," replied the tot.

"Oh, there'll be pudding soon!" cried Tom, gaily. "I'm going to earn it for you, Elsie."

"Cab'net pudding?" she asked hopefully.

"Oh, all kinds, little one."

"What's on your mind, Tom?" asked Mrs. Radcliffe, as her son began to eat, forcing himself to show a relish for the very plain food.

"Oh, I wish I could tell you, mother," he evaded. "But there's so many things—at least, they're so confused, as yet."

"Don't think too seriously, Tom, about making money."

"Why, I've got to, mother."

"We can get along a little while yet, with care, if you don't mind plain food," his mother urged.

"Get along with plain food? Why, I love it!"

Which was a lie, pure and simple, for Tom was fond of all the good things of the table. He could remember the days when he had had them, too.

As soon as he had finished his meal, and had helped his mother a bit, Tom sneaked outdoors, around to the front door, and so up to his room.

He wanted to be alone and think a bit.

"A shoestring!"

The words kept dancing through his brain.

"Even if there comes a chance to use a shoestring, where can I get it?" he wondered, wretchedly.

One thought came to him that caused his face to burn an instant later.

"Mother has a couple of hundred in bank yet. But—murder! I couldn't take her little all to blow on a crazy scheme. A mortgage on this place? That would be just as wicked, to risk her only home. She'd let me, but that wouldn't make it any less shameful. Oh, dear, if the chance comes, where on earth can I raise the shoestring?"

The more he thought it over, in that bare little room of his, the more puzzling it became.

But he still kept his mind focused on that appointed meeting at the summer-house on the Crane place.

There were a lot of things he didn't think of just now.

He would find them out later on.

But it was not yet three o'clock when Tom quietly stole from the house.

It was less than half an hour's easy walk to the Crane estate.

But Tom wanted to be there well ahead of time, for he wanted time to look about—time to find some way of being on hand to overhear what would be said in that summer-house.

Yet he had gone a bare quarter of a mile, down through one of the pretty but not greatly inhabited streets of the village, when he came upon a sight that made him forget everything else for the time.

There was Millie Stuart.

Millie during the past year had always had a large share in Tom's day dreams.

She was the daughter of the postmistress, Mrs. Stuart holding that small-salaried position because the men of

the village were too gallant to try to get it away from the widow of the former postmaster.

As the salary was but five hundred a year, Millie was not rich by any means.

Yet she and her mother managed, by small economies, to get along very decently.

Millie had the knack of looking always at her best, and it was a very good best, too, for she was the prettiest, sweetest, best-appearing girl in Greenport.

Tom, in a silent way, worshipped every light-brown hair in her head.

He knew every one of the lights and moods that appeared in her deep-blue eyes.

More than once he had managed, slyly, too, to kiss those small, pouting lips.

That was their own affair, on the happy nights when Tom had secured the privilege of escorting her home from young peoples' parties.

Millie was sixteen.

At that age a very pretty girl is sure to attract more than one sweetheart.

One who had tried to force his attentions upon her was Fred Darby, the sole and rather worthless son of old Josh Darby.

Fred had met the girl in this little by-street.

There were no houses very near the point where the two had met.

Fred, stopping the girl, had tried without success to make her agree to keep company with him.

"But why not, Millie?" he persisted.

"I don't care to keep company with you. Isn't that reason enough?" she retorted, looking frankly into his eager eyes.

"But there's no one else in Greenport fit for you to keep company with," pursued Darby.

"Isn't there?" asked Millie, quietly.

"Unless, perhaps, you're thinking of that kid, Tom Radcliffe," sneered Darby, disagreeably.

He pronounced that word, "kid," with all the superiority of one who is a grown-up young man of twenty-four.

"You might speak of Tom Radcliffe a little more respectfully," Millie returned, with spirit, her eyes flashing.

"So that's the way the wind blows, is it?" cried Darby, beginning to get angry. "Why, he's not a gentleman!"

"Are you sure of that?" asked Millie, quietly.

"He hasn't a dollar in the world!"

"Does the dollar make the gentleman?" Millie questioned, looking at this son of a rich man contemptuously.

"It goes a long way," retorted Fred Darby. "It enables him to get along without working like a drudge."

"Then a gentleman is one who doesn't have to work? Is that it?" asked Millie, smiling at Darby.

"A gentleman doesn't work, and his wife doesn't have to, either," returned the young man, importantly.

"Dear me! How interesting!"

Millie was laughing now, and this made Darby mad.

Moreover, her eyes, dancing with laughter, looked so bewitching as to tempt him.

"Millie," he cried hoarsely, "I'm going to have you. And I'm going to prove it right now by kissing you."

Before the girl had any idea of what he was about, Fred Darby had caught her in his arms.

She was stronger than he had thought. He found it out as he struggled, trying to press his face against hers.

He failed. In another twinkling he let out a yell of pain, for Tom Radcliffe was on the spot.

Tom didn't waste any time, or any words.

His whole thought was to prevent Darby from fouling the girl's lips.

Grip! Tom's sinewy young fingers wound themselves in Darby's black locks. He pulled for all he was worth, growling:

"Let go of her, you dog!"

And Darby did let go in a hurry, Millie slipping a few yards away, then turning to look on at the scene.

Tom, as soon as he saw Millie free, let go his grip on Darby's hair.

But all the boy's quick, angry fighting blood was up now.

"I think I heard you bragging about being a gentleman!" sneered the white-faced, quivering boy. "You said something about a gentleman being a fellow who doesn't work. Is a gentleman also one who doesn't fight?"

"I'll 'fight' you!" roared Darby, glowering at the boy's slighter form.

"Oh, will you?" flared Tom, snatching off and throwing down his coat. "Delighted!"

"You young ragamuffin!" rasped Darby.

"Is that the way you fight—with your mouth?" cried Tom, advancing, on his guard. "Take that for a teaser, then!"

He fainted, then landed in lightly on the tip of Fred's nose.

"You young scoundrel!" roared Darby, rushing in. "I'll teach you!"

He hit out vigorously, but that was meat to young Radcliffe.

He ducked, went under, came up, in close, and landed on Fred's jaw.

It was a clean knock-down.

Darby measured his length on the ground, with Tom, his eyes still wild, dancing over him.

"Come on! Get up!" dared Tom. "Don't lie down and play the cry-baby! Get up and show yourself a man!"

He moved away enough to encourage his foe to rise.

Yet the instant Darby was up from the ground Radcliffe closed in again.

Thump! This time on the other's nose.

The blood crimsoned the tip of that organ, then began to flow freely.

Backing away, Tom waited to see what his opponent wanted to do.

But Darby, again stung into action, was ready for more fight, though half afraid now and more cautious.

Whack! As they closed again Tom countered twice in swift succession, then rattled his left in hotly over Darby's right eye.

Again Tom danced away, as a roar came from the fellow who was getting the worst of it.

"One black eye, for sure!" mocked Tom. "Come on, now, and get the other one closed up!"

But that brought Darby to his senses.

A dude all the way through, and proud of what he considered his good looks, Fred shuddered at the thought of going through the village streets with a black eye.

Decidedly he didn't want two.

So, even at the risk of being considered whipped by Millie, the rich man's son sputtered:

"I'll finish this with you later!"

"Why not now?" mocked Tom.

But Darby turned to walk away without another word.

He couldn't get away, though.

Radcliffe darted around him and stood in his path.

"You can't go, Fred Darby, until you've said two things."

"What do you mean?" quavered the whipped one.

"First of all, you've got to say 'enough.'"

Darby glared at Tom out of his sound eye for a few seconds.

Then, seeing that the fight was certain to be on again in a second, he growled:

"I've had enough now. You'll get enough later."

"You've said 'enough,' anyway," mocked Tom. "Now you've got one more thing to say."

"What's that?" demanded Darby, suspiciously, backing slowly from before our hero's threatening fists.

"You've got to go back to Miss Stuart and say you're sorry for acting like a cur."

"I won't call myself a cur!" flared Darby.

"Then I'll go right on and prove you one!" taunted Tom, making a leap at his enemy.

"Hold on!" quavered Fred Darby, retreating.

"Walk back to Miss Stuart, then, and say what I told you."

Millie was standing, leaning against a tree.

She had looked almost faint at the first signs of fight.

But now she had recovered enough to stand quietly by, white-faced, but realizing that Tom was doing just what was right.

Darby now skulked over to where the girl stood.

He repeated the apology that Tom had ordered.

"Is that satisfactory, Miss Stuart?" Tom queried, gravely.

"Yes," nodded the white-faced girl.

"You can go now," announced Tom. "But remember your apology, and live up to it after this."

"You'll hear from this again," bellowed Darby, when he had put fifty feet between them.

"All right," Tom called back, coolly and scornfully.

Then, to the girl:

"Millie, I'm in a good deal of a hurry to-day, but I'd like to see you on your way home."

"Come along, then, Tom. But Fred Darby won't dare try to bother me again, anyway."

"He'd better not!" flared the boy. "Millie, I'm sorry I had to punch him right before you. But it was the only thing to do."

"Yes, I guess it was the only thing to do," replied the girl, quietly, her face burning as she thought of the deliberate insult that Darby had offered her.

"Let me know if he bothers you again, won't you?"

"I—I——"

Millie hesitated.

"Honest, now, Millie. Because, if you don't promise, I'll trounce him once a week, anyway, on general suspicions."

"I guess I'd better promise, then," laughed the girl, nervously.

Tom saw her to the door of the post-office, then lifted his cap and turned quickly away.

He had lost time by this adventure, but still hoped that there would be time for him to be on hand at that appointed meeting at the summer-house—a meeting to which he certainly had not been invited.

"Now I'll hit straight for the summer-house, and see what happens," resolved the boy, with a beating heart.

This summer-house was a six-sided affair, with a floor that was about forty feet across.

Inside it consisted of one room.

Its walls were open, usually, in summer, but there were glass-paned sashes that could be raised to make it weather-tight at need.

Around the bottom of the summer-house, from the ground up to the floor, ran a latticed railing.

"If I could only get under there!" quivered the boy.

Again fortune favored him. There was a gate in the lattice-work.

Throbbing, Tom opened this gate, crouched, and crawled under, pulling the gate to after him.

"I reckon I'm safe here, and pretty sure to hear what's going," murmured the boy.

Then he flushed, wondering:

"Is it just right to be sneaking under here? Hang it! I don't care! I can't! It's what happens when surveyors go sneaking around the country and lying about what they're up to. I've got to stay here now, anyway."

Indeed he had, for a party of seven men were coming slowly up the graveled walk.

Crane was one of them. Tom felt sure that the other six must be his club friends from town.

"It's ten minutes to four," announced one of the guests, looking at his watch.

"Then you've just ten minutes to wait," replied Digby Crane, as he and his guests ascended the steps to the floor above. "You'll find that Griffin & Mott, besides being first-class surveyors and landscape engineers, are also models of punctuality."

"I'm eager to hear their report," spoke another of the party.

"You'll find it will be very complete, considering that they've had to do all their work in a few hours," promised Mr. Crane. "I wish they could have taken a few days for the work. But the infernal farmers would have their suspicions up then and would charge fortunes for their barren farms."

"What had we ought to pay for the whole lot of those farms, Crane?"

"Why, at fair market rates, not above thirty thousand dollars."

"For three thousand acres?"

"Yes," replied Digby Crane, coolly. "They are all but barren farms."

"But how different those farms will bloom when we get to work on them and spend money. Why, gentlemen, that bay-front strip will be a park of wonderful beauty!"

"Don't get ahead of Griffin & Mott with your predictions," laughed Digby Crane. "We're hiring them to tell us whether the bay shore can be worked over into such a place as you gentlemen will want for the site for your country places."

"Country places?" throbbed listening Tom. "I thought so!"

"If Griffin & Mott report as favorably as we hope on the landscape possibilities of the place," asked another of the group, "how long will it take to get all the land into our own hands?"

"I can have Hume, my real estate man, here inside of three days," replied Mr. Crane. "He's one of the shrewdest, closest buyers I know. He'll talk to the farmers about a possible chance to sell a farm to a city buyer, and he'll get an option at the lowest price. He'll go to each farmer in turn, and he'll have an option from each of them before the other farmers hear of it. Hume is a wonderfully shrewd man."

"I feel better," murmured the boy underneath. "These people are planning to work in the dark. I'll work in the dark, too—and I'll work first!"

"Here come Griffin and Mott," announced Mr. Crane, as wheels were heard on the driveway.

In another minute the host was introducing his guests to the surveyors of the morning.

"Well?" asked Mr. Crane, rather impatiently.

"We've been all over the ground," replied Mr. Griffin. "We fooled the farmers by pretending that we belonged to the State survey."

"A good idea!" chuckled Mr. Crane.

"Gentlemen," went on Mr. Griffin, crisply, "we are able to give almost a complete report. We have located the best spot for the residence of each of you, according to the notes that Mr. Crane furnished us. We have also selected the best spot for the bathing pavilions. We have hit upon an ideal site for the dancing casino and concert hall. And we have chosen an admirable place for the big hotel, where it will not interfere with the privacy of any of your homes,

In a word, we predict that we shall be able to turn the bay shore of Greenport into one of the most beautiful, famous and exclusive summer coast spots in America. Here are some of our notes."

Then followed a report, questions and discussion about details, few of which listening Tom Radcliffe understood.

But he grasped the main point of it all.

Greenport's bay shore was to be bought by a group of very wealthy men.

Moreover, they wanted possession as quickly as possible, in order that they might tear down all the present farm and other buildings.

"For," as one of the speakers overheard put it, "we must begin our houses and the hotels at once, so that we can have them far advanced by the time that the frost comes. Then we can have all our buildings finished and ready for occupancy by next spring."

"This ought to be worth a small barrel of money to me!" quivered Tom. "Oh, confound you, go away!"

This last savage appeal was muttered under his breath. Tom was glaring at one of Crane's dogs, which, leaving the group above, had come down to the ground.

The canine was now sniffing at the lattice-work, its suspicious eyes on our hero.

"Wow! wouf!" challenged the dog, angrily.

"Crane," called one of the guests, "your dog has flushed up something under this summer-house."

"Sounds like it," Crane admitted.

"We'd better see what it is."

"Oh, Lord!" groaned Tom. "Caught now!"

"Here, Prince!" called Mr. Crane, sharply.

"Wow! wouf! wow!" snarled the dog, trying frantically to paw down the lattice-work that separated him from the eavesdropper.

"Come here, Prince," spoke the master, more sharply.

"Wow! wow! wouf!" insisted the frenzied dog.

"Better go and see what it is, Crane," insisted the same friend.

"Come here, sir—this instant!" commanded the dog's master. "I'm not going down there to see what you've got, you fool dog! A cat, a chipmunk, or something of the sort. Come here, sir! Do you hear me?"

Whining, the dog gave up its quest and went crawling toward its master.

"Thank you, Mr. Crane," murmured the startled boy, beginning to breathe again.

"Messrs. Griffin and Mott," went on Crane, "you will now have at least three days in which you can go ahead with your plans. Don't show up on the desired land again, but, from your notes, go ahead and draw plans showing the whole grand park-to-be, according to your ideas."

With that, there was a general moving of feet overhead.

"They're going, and I can go soon," quivered the boy, eagerly.

He saw the last of them depart, the dog crazy to come back to the lattice-work, but his master sternly calling him away.

At last Tom himself crept out from under the summer-house.

He breathed more easily, though, when he found himself once more in the driveway.

"Now, if any one catches me," he murmured, "all they can do is to order me off the place, and I want to go, anyway."

CHAPTER III.

OTHERS ON THE SCENT.

"Whew. But it's hard! Tough!"

Tom, having safely escaped from the Crane place, had turned his face toward the bay.

Here, seated close to the shore, once in a while tossing a pebble into the water this late afternoon, he went all over the problem.

"It's fierce, when a fellow has a chance to make a fortune, to be shy the few hundred dollars that would make it possible! Yet it would take a few hundred dollars even to get options."

An option on a piece of real estate is the guaranteed privilege of buying that real estate within a given time, at a given figure.

Thus, one may secure an option on a farm at four thousand dollars, the one who holds the option having the right to buy it at that price at any time within the stated time, say three or six months.

In case the holder of the option decided to buy before his time is up, the fifty or a hundred dollars that he has paid for the option goes toward the purchase price.

But if he does not buy, the money that he paid for the option belongs to the owner from whom he secured the option.

Now, farm property around Greenport had been so difficult to sell that our hero felt certain that fifty or a hundred dollars would secure an option from each of the farmers who owned land fronting on the bay.

But where to get the fifty or hundred in each case?

That was what Tom was racking his brain over.

Much of this money could be obtained by his mother at the bank if she would give a mortgage on her little home.

"But I won't see the home risked for anything in the world!" muttered Tom, savagely. "Nor will I touch a cent of the little fund she has in the bank. There must be some other way to get together the funds that I need. But, confound it—how?"

Again he cudged his brains, groaning as the full realization of his helplessness came upon him.

"Some way there must be," he groaned, over and over again.

But that way, if there was one, would not come to him while he was sitting here on the bay shore.

Sighing, feeling wholly "blue," Tom rose at last, picking his way along the beach.

Ahead of him was Johnson's lumber yard, with its unloading pier jutting out into the bay.

"Business will pick up some for Johnson when the boom hits here," grimaced the boy. "Wouldn't he be tickled if he knew what's coming to this sleepy old town?"

When almost up to the lumber yard Tom witnessed a meeting in front of a great heap of new, empty packing boxes.

Old Josh Darby, coming out of the mill in the lumber yard, met his son, Fred, in front of the pile of boxes.

"I don't want them to see me," muttered the boy. "Old Josh is too powerful, and too hard a hitter. He'll be sore when he hears what a trouncing I gave his darling boy!"

From where Tom had caught sight of father and son it was easy enough to slip around behind the pile of boxes.

This our hero did. He would have kept on past that pile, keeping it between himself and his enemies, had it not been for words that came to his ears from the lips of Josh Darby:

"I've bought this business, and the good will, Fred."

"You have? What on earth do you want of it, guv'nor?" Fred demanded in surprise.

"Maybe, lad, I'm thinking of making you a present of this mill and lumber yard, as a good start in business for you."

"For me? Huh! There ain't money enough in this business to keep a cow from starving."

"I know it, Fred," chuckled Josh Darby. "That's why I was able to buy it so cheap."

"You must have wanted to pitch your money away, guv'nor. This place don't sell a thousand dollars worth in a year."

"Maybe it hasn't, Fred, but it's going to. There's a big boom going to hit Greenport right away."

"Eh? What's that?" gasped Radcliffe, pricking up his ears, and his heart beginning to thump.

Father and son were still talking, but their voices were so low that our hero could no longer hear.

"If I could climb over these boxes, but keep out of sight!" quivered the boy, looking upward at the top of the pile.

The way the boxes were stacked this did not seem a difficult feat.

"I've got to hear what Josh is saying!" he muttered, resolutely. "I have simply got to know whether he has wind of this new scheme!"

From box to box our hero crept, making no noise.

In a few moments he was almost at the top of the pile—as high as he could safely go without risk of being seen by the Darbys.

"The surveyors are out, going all over the bayshore farms," he heard old Josh whisper, tremulously. "And a lot of Crane's friends are out here, too. Now, I'm old enough and smart enough in the real estate game, Fred, lad, to know what that means. And once, to-day, I got close enough to the engineers—on the other side of a line of bushes, you see—to hear one surveyor saying to the other that the hill on Jordan's place would be a fine site for the

dancing casino. Now, what does that mean, when these surveyors are hired by men like Crane and his friends?"

"How do you know Crane and his friends did hire them?" asked Fred, also in a whisper.

"Know? Why, I watched and followed the surveyors. They went straight to Crane's."

"So you've bought this lumber yard, Dad, on the chance that there'll be a lot of building, and that you'll be able to sell the lumber?"

Josh Darby gave a snort of impatience.

"Sometimes, Fred," he snarled, "you seem like a natural-born fool! This lumber yard is only a drop in the bucket. My boy, I'm going to get long-time options on the bay shore farms."

"O-o-oh, gracious!" throbbed listening Tom, dizzily. "Josh Darby on the scent and going to get into the game, with all his cash? That lets me out!"

All Tom's scheming through the day seemed, in an instant, wasted!

Without a cent, how could he possibly "buck against" this man with his thousands?

"You may get left, guv'nor," mumbled Fred.

"No, I won't," retorted Josh, warmly. "Lad, I know the real estate signs too well. I'm going to telegraph the bank to send money. It'll be here day after to-morrow, in the morning—a lot of money, in crisp, bright, new bills. Then I'll see each one of the farmers separately, and round up the whole gang like lightning, getting a six months' option on each farm at a low price. They'll sell low, before they hear about the new boom. Fred, on this deal I'll clean up fifty thous—"

Crash! clatter! bing! thud!

Tom Radcliffe, bending eagerly forward to hear more clearly, upset the balance of the top of that pile of boxes.

Now the boxes went crashing downward, and Tom went flying, spinning, pawing and clutching with them.

Crash! smash! bump!

Josh Darby let out a yell and jumped as Tom and half a dozen loose, empty boxes landed at his feet.

"Tom Radcliffe!" quavered the old sharper in dismay.

"Tom Radcliffe!" screamed Fred, drawing back. "That's the fellow I want. Pounce on him, guv'nor!"

It was not a difficult thing to do, for Tom had some difficulty in extracting himself from under a pile of smashed timber.

As he sprang up to his feet Josh Darby swooped forward, seizing him by the collar.

"What are you doing here, you young vampire?" roared Josh, holding the boy in that powerful grip of his and shaking him as if he expected to shake out the truth.

"He gave me this black eye!" quavered Fred, pointing to his much damaged optic.

"What are you doing here? Why don't you speak, you young scoundrel?" raged Josh.

"Give me chance to, won't you?" demanded Tom.

"Well, speak, then—and be mighty quick about it!"

roared Josh, as he stopped the shaking but held the boy fast.

"Give me time to wake up," begged Tom, in pretended stupidity.

"Wake up?" demanded the old man, jeeringly, harshly. "What do you want to wake up for?"

"I was asleep on that pile of boxes," answered Tom, yawning. "Didn't think I was going to sleep, but I must have dozed off just the same. The next thing I knew was when I found myself crashing down here. I must have rolled in my sleep."

"Oh, you did, eh?" demanded Josh, looking relieved.

"Hold him, guv'nor!" cried Fred, dancing close. "Hold him until I soak him hard all over the face! He gave me this black eye and a raw nose! Hold him until I pay him back!"

"Pay him back, son!" bawled Josh, holding Tom out in front of him, now, with both big, strong hands.

Fred leaped forward to enjoy his chance to the full.

But Tom, born earlier than the day before yesterday, kicked viciously back of him, almost breaking one of Josh's shins.

Then, as that worthy let go with a howl, and bent to rub his injured shin, Tom whirled around, catching Josh full on the jaw and knocking him down.

"I'm coming for you, now!" bellowed Tom, wheeling at Fred.

That youth took to his heels, and Tom, wheeling, caught Josh on the nose as the latter tried to get up.

Then Tom drew back, looking at his work with a smug grin.

"Confound you, I'll trounce you good for that!" roared Josh. "Come on, Fred!"

The son turned. With both bent on thrashing him at once there was nothing for Tom Radcliffe to do but turn and streak it for safety.

"Hold on, there!" blazed Josh, sprinting after the boy. "Hold on! I'm going to have you arrested for assault!"

That threat made our hero sprint the harder.

But around the corner ahead showed up Pembroke, the town's one policeman.

"Pembroke!" screamed Josh. "Stop that young scoundrel. I charge him with felonious assault! Catch him!"

Pembroke came running down the street toward the boy.

"Oh, it's no use!" groaned the boy, desperately. "I can't lick the town, or run away from it, either!"

He halted and stood waiting for Officer Pembroke to reach him.

CHAPTER IV.

THE SHOESTRING.

"What's the charge against young Radcliffe, Mr. Darby?" questioned Officer Pembroke, as father and son came panting up.

"Felonious assault!" glowered Josh. "I'll have him sent

to the reform school until he's twenty-one, for what he did to me!"

"You make a charge of felony?" asked the cop, in surprise.

"I do, officer!"

"And you'll back it up in court? You won't go back on the charge?"

"I'll back that charge with my dying breath, if necessary!" stormed the old man. "Look at my son's face! See that eye? Young Radcliffe did that earlier in the day. He has had it in for our family. He tried to break my leg just now."

"That's right," rejoined Fred. "I saw him do it!"

"I suppose you know, Mr. Pembroke, that there ar two sides to every story?"

"Of course there are, Tom," replied the officer, who was also a neighbor. "And I never believed you the kind of a boy to do anything like this."

"You take him along, officer!" raged Josh Darby.

"Since you make a charge of felony, I'll have to," replied the cop, in a tone that conveyed that he would slip out of doing the thing if he could.

But Tom had not used up all his ammunition.

"Mr. Darby," he remarked, with a meaning grin, "perhaps I wasn't asleep, after all!"

"What do you mean?" throbbed Josh, turning color.

"I wasn't asleep. Shall I say right out, here, what I mean by that?"

"Hold your tongue, you young scoundrel!" raged Josh.

"You talk like that any more, and I'll wag my tongue for an hour," threatened Radcliffe. "And if you have me taken to the station I'll talk a lot, too. See here, Josh Darby, the best thing, and the safest thing you can do, is to walk one side with me and hear a few words that I've got to say."

Tom's tone was one of mastery.

He spoke as if he meant to have his own way, and knew that he could not be bluffed out of it.

Josh looked uneasily from him to the officer.

"Going to hint to Mr. Pembroke that he let me go?" Tom asked, tantalizingly. "I wasn't asleep, you know!"

"Let young Radcliffe walk down the street a bit with me, if you please, officer," requested Josh Darby, looking queer around the lips.

Pembroke let go of Tom's shoulder as if glad to do it.

"Come on, and hear what I've got to say," Tom fairly ordered his enemy.

He walked Josh for some distance, then halted where their backs were turned to the representative of the law.

"Going to have me locked up, while you enjoy yourself by buying the bay shore farms cheap to sell to the Crane crowd, are you?" grinned Tom.

"What do you know about that?" rasped Josh. "What do you think you know about it?"

"I know enough to send word to those farmers to hold on to their properties for a big raise that's sure to come,"

affirmed our hero. "I know enough, Josh Darby, to spoil the best real estate deal you ever planned!"

Josh Darby's face was a study.

Faced by the danger of having his boldest stroke in finance dashed down into ruin, he shook and turned green and white.

"You see," clicked Tom, "I've got you, and I've got you good and hard. On the kind of perjured evidence that you'll cook up you can put me in the police station, and perhaps in jail—but I can put you in Torment! For you love money even better even than yourself!"

"Tom," whined the old man, almost chattering, "you're too fine a lad, after all, to get into serious trouble. Now, if I drop this whole matter, what will you do?"

"I'm more than likely to hold my tongue about this new real estate move," Tom answered, with meaning, malicious sweetness.

Had Josh Darby been an expert in human nature, he might have seen something in that smile to make him more afraid.

But Josh, like most plodding money-grubbers, was not clever in anything outside of money.

"I'm going to let you go, then," he announced.

"Oh, thank you," murmured Tom, sweetly.

"And I'm going to make you a little present," suggested Darby, fumbling in a vest pocket and producing a twenty-dollar bill, which he tried to hand our hero so cautiously that Officer Pembroke would not see.

"What's that for?" demanded Tom, thrusting his hands behind his back.

"For your good will," coaxed Josh.

"I won't take it!"

"Oh, we'll call it fifty, then," sighed Josh. "But that's the most——"

"It ought to be," blurted Tom. "But I won't touch that, either!"

"For heaven's sake, you don't expect a hundred, do you?" gasped Josh, anxiously.

"No, I don't."

Josh groaned, but he surveyed the boy's perplexing face with growing anxiety.

"You're a terrible hard bargainer, Tom Radcliffe," faltered the man who loved money. "But, see here, I'm going to make my last offer—and I've got the money right about me. For your silence I've already given you your liberty. In addition I'll offer you two hundred dollars in good cash."

Two hundred dollars? Why, that would be the "shoe-string!" He could go into the real estate game himself with that much money. He felt sure he could!

"Will you take it?" pressed Josh, eagerly.

But Tom had got a grip, in an instant, on all the honesty that was in his splendid, big, open nature.

"Take it?" he quivered, scornfully. "No, I won't, Josh Darby! Nor any other amount, either! If I did, do you know what folks would call me? A blackmailer! And

I'd be one, too, if I stooped as low as your crooked soul would make me stoop, Josh Darby!"

"Then what do you propose?" demanded the money-grabber.

"Just what we've already agreed to," came promptly from our hero.

"And you won't do a thing to spoil my game?" begged Darby.

"I won't noise it around that the Crane crowd are after the water-front. I won't do a thing to spoil any willingness the farmers may feel for selling their shore-front properties," agreed Tom.

Though Josh Darby wasn't clever enough to realize it, this promise meant something vastly different from what he wanted.

"But the stupid, vengeful old fellow seemed satisfied.

"If you'll do just what you say, Tom——" he quavered.

"I will," promised the boy, grimly.

"And maybe, Christmas, you'll get something nice from me, anyway," hinted Josh.

"Maybe I will," muttered the boy, grimly.

He watched Josh, while the latter went over and spoke to Officer Pembroke. Then both walked briskly out of sight.

Tom, himself, was about to stroll on when the figure of a man appeared suddenly from behind a tree some forty yards away.

"Boy, hold on," he muttered, "I want a word with you. I couldn't help being interested in what I saw," ran on the stranger, as he came up. He was a prosperous-looking man of perhaps forty. "I saw that you had some row on with Josh Darby, and that he let up and tried to offer you money."

"He tried to put me in the light of a blackmailer!" quivered Tom, indignantly.

"Well, you're not, for I saw you repulse his money. May I ask how much he offered you?"

"Two hundred dollars."

"Whew! And you refused it? You don't look rich. Boy, I judge that you hate old Josh Darby, at that."

"I do," vented Tom. "And, if I only had that two hundred dollars I'd beat Josh Darby out of the biggest single game he ever went into!"

"Would you, though?" demanded the stranger, eagerly.

"Would I?" writhed Tom. "Wouldn't I, though! That was why Darby offered me money—because I'm on to his whole scheme. It's the biggest he ever played, and with two hundred dollars I could have beaten him out in a few hours."

The stranger looked uncommonly hard at our hero.

Then, for an instant he turned squarely away. When he faced back again he said, hurriedly:

"Boy, I believe you're honest. I know you are, for I've just seen big proof of it. I hate Josh Darby as much as you do. He has done me a dirty trick. Never mind the details. But I'd risk the money to see anyone get even with him! Promise me, on your honor, that, if I lend

you two hundred dollars, you'll return it when you prosper, in an envelope addressed to J. D., General Delivery, New York post-office."

"Why, of course I will," Ted laughed.

"Then don't thank me, and don't ever try to find out who I am, for you won't succeed. Do your best to get even with Darby for me! Now, keep your word."

With that the stranger thrust something into Radcliffe's hand and fled.

"What's this?" gasped the astounded boy, counting bits of paper, rapidly. "Two hundred dollars? And nobody robbed or blackmailed! Thunderation! I've heard, before this, that honesty is its own reward, but I never expected to see it proved in this hot-foot fashion. The shoe-string! The chance!"

Then, suddenly breaking off, Ted began to count rapidly. By the time that he had finished counting a thousand he broke into a run.

But the prosperous stranger had disappeared.

Then Tom Radcliffe came to his senses. If he was to make real use of the "shoe-string," then he must act quickly.

First he ran to the livery stable, where he hired a horse and surrey. Next he went to the home of the school principal, of whom he rented that gentleman's typewriter for twenty-four hours.

Next, our hero stopped at Ted's home long enough for a whispered conversation.

"All right! I'll be there," promised Ted, as they parted. "And I'll be sure to have Joe with me, too."

Then Tom Radcliffe drove hurriedly homeward, at the supper hour, but thinking naught of supper!

He was fairly bursting with the stupendous plan that was surging through his brain.

He was feverishly hurrying to make it all dawn on his mother!

"Whew! But it's a corker, if I can only put it through!" throbbed Shoestring Tom.

CHAPTER V.

SUCCESS OR A FEVER.

"Mr. Jordan, can I speak with you a moment?"

"Why, sure, Tom."

"By ourselves, I mean."

"Certain!"

It was just after dark.

The rig that Tom had hired stood before one of the village grocery stores.

Inside our hero had espied one of the farmers who owned land on the bay shore.

The farmer followed Tom to a corner by themselves at the back of the store.

"Mr. Jordan," whispered the boy, "would you sell your farm if you got a good chance?"

"Guess I might," returned the farmer. "Who wants to buy?"

"Now, that wouldn't be a real business-like way for me

to go about it, would it?" smiled Tom. "Where would I get in on that?"

"I'd do the right thing by you, Tom."

"Of course you would, Mr. Jordan, but I'd rather do the right thing by myself. Now, it's this way. I know a party who is thinking of buying a sea-shore farm. Wants it for a sort of place to lay off on in the summer, and to some shooting in the fall."

"City man?"

"Yes."

"Got lots of money, Tom?"

"Oh, I don't know as he's rotten with money, but he has some. If he buys in this part of the country, I think very likely, Mr. Jordan, I can swing him your way."

"What do you want out of it, Tom?"

"All I can get, of course."

"How much is that?"

"Let us figure it another way, Mr. Jordan. How much is your farm worth?"

"About—thirty-eight hundred," replied Farmer Jordan.

"It's taxed at eighteen hundred."

"Ye-es."

"And property in this village is assessed at about sixty cents on the dollar of real value," Tom pursued. "That would bring the value of your farm at about three thousand dollars, wouldn't it?"

"I wouldn't sell it for that!" interjected the farmer, becoming keen with a trade in prospect.

"I'm not going to ask you to, Mr. Jordan. When you sell a farm to a man from the city, who doesn't know anything about farms, you expect to get a good price."

"You sure do."

"Now, you'd be satisfied with forty-five hundred, wouldn't you?"

"Well, I'd want to think that over."

"If you have to think over a scheme like that," smiled Tom, swiftly, "I'll save time by going to some other man on the bay shore. I can't waste time talking to a man who wants to think over whether he'd sell his place for half as much again as it's worth."

"I'll tell you what, Tom; you bring along a man who'll pay forty-five hundred for my place, and he can have it."

"I don't suppose I can make the sale," Tom went on, thoughtfully. "It's all a chance, you know. But I know who the man is, and you don't, and you can't find him, for he doesn't live in these parts."

"Well, what do you want, Tom?"

"It would take me some little time to bring the sale about at all," resumed the boy. "Now, what I want is just this, Mr. Jordan. I want you to give me a six months' option on your place, at forty-five hundred. The chance isn't a big one, but it's worth going after. As it's a small chance, all I can risk on the option is ten dollars. But I'll pay you that, now, if you're willing to give me six months in which to find a purchaser at forty-five hundred. That's fair, isn't it?"

"Let me have a day or two to think it over, Tom," begged

the farmer, who began to suspect there might be something bigger in the air.

He would have thought Tom was bluffing, pure and simple, if our hero hadn't taken the trouble to hold up a ten-dollar bill temptingly.

"Give you time?" echoed our hero. "Mr. Jordan, I'm not going to play fast and loose, in that style, with the first chance I ever had to make two or three hundred dollars in a lump. So, if I haven't got your signature to the option within two minutes I shall be on my way to see some other man who knows how to talk business. It's simply now or never, neighbor."

"But where's the papers?"

"My mother's got that, out in the carriage. Now, see here, Mr. Jordan, it isn't taking much of a chance, on your part, is it? You get ten dollars now, and a bare chance that, inside of six months, you'll get half as much again as your farm is worth. Are you ready to sign?"

Farmer Jordan thought of a calf he could buy with that ten dollars.

"Yes; I suppose so," he agreed.

"Where's your wife?"

"Down at the drug-store."

"She'll have to sign with you, as it's a homestead. But you must get her to come up without delay. If she has to wait to do a lot of thinking, as you did, Mr. Jordan, then I shall hustle off after someone who can think faster. I don't want to rush you, but I haven't all night to spare."

Jordan hurried off after his wife, coming back with her promptly.

The farmer and his wife signed the paper, giving Mrs. Radcliffe the option for which Tom had asked.

"I hope this isn't throwing money away," laughed Tom, nervously, as he passed over the ten dollars.

"I hope not, for both our sakes," grinned Jordan. "But, anyway, Tom, this ten is mine, now."

"It's yours, Mr. Jordan."

Ted Denton signed as a witness to the paper.

Then Joe Atterbury affixed his signature also.

Three more of the bay shore farmers Tom found in town.

With each he followed the same tactics he had pursued with Jordan—and in each case he got his option.

These four brisk deals occupied a little less than half an hour.

Throbbing inwardly, but outwardly calm, Radcliffe turned his hired horse into the bay shore road.

In another hour and a half Tom had secured signatures to the other seven options.

As our hero at last drove homeward he was in a position to buy nearly three thousand acres of bayshore land, at a total price of forty-two thousand dollars.

For all of the options he had paid out just one hundred and ten dollars.

"That's working on a shoestring, sure!" he told himself, feverishly. "And most of the farmers seemed to hate to take my money. Silé Higgins said it seemed like steal-

ing a baby's candy. Oh, well; oh, well! We shall see! A wonderful day's work, Tom Radcliffe!"

His head was swimming by the time that he drew up to let Ted and Joe out.

"Thank you, fellows, thank you a thousand times!" he cried, earnestly. "And you'll keep quiet, for a while, won't you?"

"You don't have to ask that, do you, Tom, old chap?" demanded Ted, scornfully.

While Joe Atterbury, who was known as "the silent boy," only smiled.

Tom drove his mother home, then drove back to the livery stable, almost in an aching trance.

He hardly knew how he ran back over the ground.

But he burst in on his mother, threw his arms around her neck, and cried:

"We've done it, mother! We've done it! We've made our fortune and on a shoestring. But tell me, mother—is this success, or have I only got a fever? Whoop!"

Tom Radcliffe danced and capered as if he had suddenly gone mad.

CHAPTER VI.

THE TREACHERY OF THE BAY.

"There's a grand old storm coming down over the water, Ted!"

"Humph! Precious little you're thinking about that, old fellow!"

"Why do you say that, Ted?" Tom asked.

"Why, the looks of you! Every now and then you'll be as white as a ghost. Then, all of a sudden, you'll flare up and seem to be burning. Tom, you've got something heavy on your mind!"

"Maybe I have," admitted young Radcliffe.

"Of course you have!"

"Before very long, Ted, I'll tell you just what it is."

"Now, see here," exploded Ted, honestly, "when did I ever seek to nose into your affairs? You've got some affair just now, Tom Radcliffe, but if it's yours it's an honest one. Honestly, I don't want to know anything about things until you're ready to tell me. And that ain't now."

"Why do you say that, Ted?"

"Because it's plain that the thing, whatever it is, ain't settled yet. And it ain't your way to talk about a thing until it's settled."

Tom smiled, Ted's reasoning was so good.

This was the day after the night on which our hero had secured the options.

That forenoon Tom had hired the horse and surrey again.

Taking Mrs. Radcliffe along with them, they had driven some ten miles to the nearest bank that had safety deposit vaults.

There, in one of the boxes of the big vault, Tom had safely stowed away the papers which, he hoped, controlled the way to a fortune.

They had reached home again by early afternoon.

Later in the afternoon Ted had dropped around to see his chum.

He had found Tom as restless as a mouse in a trap.

When spoken to Radcliffe didn't always return sensible answers.

It was plain that he was under the strain of great excitement.

And, at last, Tom himself had proposed that they stroll down toward the bay.

They had reached the dock near the lumber yard, the only dock of which Greenport boasted.

But here Tom seemed as restless as ever.

The freshening breeze, however, cooled his hot face. He looked wistfully toward the squally clouds toward the northeast.

"We're going to have a tough gale, Ted," the boy went on, regarding the clouds.

"Pooh!"

"It looks like a norther, Ted."

"Nothing of the sort, Tom Radcliffe, as you'd know if you were wholly in your right mind. Those clouds show nothing more than a squall, a few wind-puffs. It may be nasty for an hour, and then the stars will be out as bright as ever they shone. We don't get northerers at this time of the year."

"If it's going to be only a squall," murmured Tom, "I'd like to be out in it under reefed canvas."

"Say," observed Ted, enthusiastically, "now you're shouting! A sail just now would be grand, wouldn't it?"

Tom looked wistfully at the Scud, a small sloop yacht that lay tied to the dock.

"Say," he whispered, "do you suppose Captain Granger would let us take her out—without him, I mean? I've got the price."

"You can ask him," jeered Ted. "There he is."

Captain Mart Grange, or Cap Grange, as he was generally called, at that moment came up out of the cabin of his boat and stepped ashore.

Grange did not bear any too good a reputation around Greenport.

Not that anyone knew anything against him, for no one did.

He passed as a fisherman, and certainly went out on regular trips, bringing back fish with him.

But no one in Greenport could understand why, with such a small boat, he should need a crew of two men.

One of the men of the crew was a gloomy, silent Swede, known by the name of Dalsen.

The other was a scowling Italian, whose name no one seemed to know.

The captain and his crew lived at different lodging places in the village, and seldom mixed with other folks.

As Grange came off his boat now he shot a single look at the boys, then he stalked heavily away from the dock towards the town.

"I guess I won't ask him," smiled Tom. "He looks too much like a pirate. But, honest, Ted, I wish there was

some other boat around here that could be hired. It'd be a grand evening for a sail. See how the water's roughening."

"Maybe you'll get your norther," mused Ted. "But I doubt it. The waves are somewhat rough, though."

"And getting rougher, every moment. Look at 'em."

"Oh, it's too mighty bad to see a good sailing wind like this, and have no boat!" sighed Ted.

"Hullo! There comes the Magic, and just in time, before the gale, if there's to be one."

Tom pointed over the waters to the southern entrance to the bay, where the smoke of a small coast steamer showed.

The Magic, engaged in carrying freight and occasional passengers along the coast, made a stop at Greensport once in every few days.

"Is she coming in this trip?" wondered Ted.

"Of course; see how she's changing her way. But, Ted! What on earth is the skipper trying to come so close to Shaler's Ledge for?"

"Doesn't the chump know it's full ebb tide?" demanded Ted, springing forward to the string-piece.

"There he is, trying to come right in over the ledge!"

"Of course, and he draws six feet and there can't be five feet of water over the ledge at this minute."

"Oh, the fool!" panted Tom, staring across the water.

It was, indeed, a risky thing that the skipper of the Magic was doing.

Both boys watched, as if fascinated.

They were too far away for any signals of theirs to be made out.

The skipper probably wouldn't have heeded their signals, anyway.

So they watched, almost with bated breath, until, of a sudden, they saw the little steamer take a spring backward, keel over to port, and then remain stationary.

"There, they've struck!" quavered Tom.

"Of course they have! There goes the steam from her whistle."

A moment or two later the hoarse, deep-throated bellow of the Magic's whistle reached their ears.

"Struck! And, by Jupiter! Look at the waves now!" gasped Tom, his face paling. "Small boats won't live on that water now!"

Again the appeal of the whistle came to their ears.

"Where's Cap Granger?" throbbed Tom, looking around him. "He must get out there quick!"

But Cap Granger was already out of sight.

The sky grew blacker. The blow was upon them, and sweeping over the bay, piling up giant white-caps.

"The Magic is an old boat, and won't stand much of this," quivered Ted. "She'll be in pieces in half an hour."

"The Scud'll have to put out there."

"I'm going to find Granger now!" uttered Ted, resolutely, wheeling.

"Look!" almost screamed Tom.

Flames were bursting out through the roof of the deck-house of the steamer, well up forward.

Afterward the boys learned that the sudden lurching and heeling of the little steamer had upset boiling fat on the stove in the cook-galley.

In an instant the flames were leaping up.

In that stiff breeze, with next to no fire apparatus, and a crew raw in the fire-drill, the Magic was doomed.

"There's no time to find Granger!" throbbed Tom.

"What, then?"

"With human lives in danger no trifling law can stand in the way," shouted Tom Radcliffe, leaping forward and bounding into the standing-room of the Scud.

"What you going to do?" shouted Ted after him.

"Cast off, Ted!"

"Going to take this boat?"

"As fast as I can."

"But Granger——"

"He isn't here to stop us. Cast off that bow-line, Ted, and jump aboard!"

Tom had carried the stern-line with him as he boarded the Scud.

Now he had leaped forward and was putting the full three reefs in the mainsail.

"Get hold at your end, and reef for all you're worth!" came Tom's sharp order.

Working like beavers, they soon had the reefs in. A strong pull at the halyards, and the abbreviated mainsail was up.

Tom, leaving his chum to make fast, sprang aft to the wheel.

Hauling the sheet in, cautiously, until she felt the strength of the wind, he turned the wheel hard over to port and went off on a wide tack. It was the swiftest way of getting there, to stand far out and then to make a straight run almost before the wind.

The first excitement over, Tom's eyes shone with the pleasure of handling a staunch boat in such a breeze.

It took a master, a boy on the edge of the salt water and loving the sport, to handle a boat to the best advantage in such a squall as this, and with such a stake of human life depending on his skill.

The spray dashed in his face, but Tom shook it out of his eyes and laughed.

Gone, now, was every thought of an option.

The Magic, burning over yonder, made a beautiful if tragic sight against the darkening sky.

Ted Denton, plunging aft, dropped into the standing-room and glanced ashore.

"There's Grange at the wharf, shaking his fist and bawling at us," he reported.

"I can't hear him," Tom rejoined, grimly.

"He wants us to put about and go back."

"I suppose so."

"Had we better go back, and let the man handle his own boat?"

"Nix!" Tom roared, above the roaring of the breeze.

"That would lose some precious minutes. Get your eye on the steamer, and see how she's blazing."

Tom soon had the Scud in the straight stretch, bearing straight down on the doomed steamer.

Well did the Scud deserve her name, for, in that stiff wind she flew forward like a race-horse!

And Tom Radcliffe, his face wet, his eyes full of the salt water, and drenched to the skin, felt in his element.

"There's a fool jumping overboard," reported Ted.

"If he has a life preserver, he's doing the wise thing," gruffed Tom. "Run forward, Ted, and be ready with boat-hook and lines. We've got to do some smart, brisk work!"

From the blazing Magic, as they scudded up, a boat put off with nearly a score of people in it.

It lay low in the water, overloaded with frantic ones whom the mate was trying to calm.

"I'll make for that boat, first," concluded Tom.

The boat, too, was heading for him.

Over the waters came the mate's hoarse hail:

"Steer so we can come up under your lee quarter!"

Tom waved one hand to show that he heard.

Then, with a flourish, he brought the Scud up and hove to just as the small boat grated against his lee rail astern.

He and Ted sprang forward, helping the passengers aboard in a twinkling.

Two went overboard in the scrambling, but these Ted and a sailor from the Magic rescued with the boat-hook.

Near them in the dark they could make out four human beings, floating with the help of life preservers.

These they hastily picked up, while the sea rolled over the Scud, the scuppers having all they could do to unload the little deck of water.

"The rest of you get life preservers and jump overboard!" bellowed Tom, making a speaking trumpet of his hands. "We don't dare come in close!"

There were less than ten men left on the doomed steamer now, among them the captain.

That officer managed to make the frantic ones do what was wanted of them.

On the weather side of the burning steamer, Tom sailed slowly along, with many hands to stretch out to the swimmers.

Twenty minutes more of brisk work, and the Magic's captain came aft to report hoarsely:

"Young man, I've got you to thank that not a life has been lost!"

"Everyone safe, captain?"

"The last soul, thank Heaven!"

"Port it is, then!"

Tom threw the wheel over, rounded the blazing craft, and started on the two-mile run for Greenport.

With nearly thirty people aboard the little craft was so crowded that there wasn't room to turn around in.

But Tom, insisting on room enough to handle wheel and sheet, sent the Scud spinning over the water.

Then, at last, they rounded in by the dock, and Tom.

easing off his sheet, made such a handy landing that the captain of the *Magic* gruffed out:

"Boy, you're a safer skipper than I am."

Ted, as they made the landing, was looking for the face of Cap Grange.

That worthy, however, was not to be seen.

Only Josh Darby was on the wharf to receive them.

That money-sharp's face wore an ugly scowl as he caught sight of Tom Radcliffe.

"The young imp, after beating me out of the best thing of my life, is now standing up to be a hero!" growled Josh.

For Darby, an hour or two earlier, had tried to sound Sile Higgins on the asking-price of his farm.

Then it was that Josh heard about the option.

Taking alarm like a flash, Josh had made two or three other hurried queries. He had learned that our hero held options on the whole bay shore frontage.

Josh Darby had not by any means given up on learning this.

There surely would be some way of outwitting Tom and his mother.

Nevertheless, the money-sharp was fearfully incensed.

Captain, crew, and passengers from the *Magic* came crowding ashore, anxious to get to some place where they could get off their wet clothes.

"You boys'll hear from this in the way of a reward," predicted the steamer's captain, waiting long enough to help the youngsters make snug aboard the *Scud*.

Then Tom, Ted and the captain left the dock together, for the youngsters had just discovered that it was long past supper time!

"Now, let me see," mused Josh Darby. "When Grange found the boys had gone out on his boat he was frightfully angry. What about, I wonder? As he stamped past me without seeing me he made some remark to the effect that things would be all up if the boys found the hiding-place under the starboard bunk. I wonder what is, or was, in that hiding-place?"

With Josh, to wonder was to investigate.

First of all, he took a swift look around, to make sure that there was no one near.

Next, swift as a flash, Josh sprang into the *Scud's* standing-room, then bounded into the cabin.

For a moment or two, only, was he gone.

When he reappeared, Josh held in his hand something that he took a swift, chuckling look at in the hatchway of the cabin.

Then, with a swift look around him once more, he leaped up on to the dock, and disappeared.

Yet, a few moments later, walking up the street, he met Cap Grange hustling down to the water-front.

"Guess you missed a reward, Grange," hinted Josh, cunningly.

"What d'ye mean?" growled out Grange.

"Why, you weren't around, and Tom Radcliffe took out your boat. I guess he got a reward on the spot, for when

he left I saw him hurrying off with an oblong black box."

"No, is that so?"

With a growl of rage Grange sprang forward toward the dock, while Josh Darby, looking back after him, chuckled softly:

"I guess I've put one bad enemy on the trail of Tom Radcliffe," muttered the money-sharp. "I'll watch and see."

Tom in the meantime, had hurried home, had told his mother what had happened, had had a rub-down and a change of clothes, and now he was finishing his hot supper.

Rap-tap! came, heavily on the door. Bing!

Tom sprang to the door, opening it.

Cap Grange stood outside, sullen and ugly looking.

"You took my boat out to the burning steamer," he accused.

"Why, yes," admitted Tom. "You weren't there, and something had to be done quickly."

"Any idea what you did to my boat?"

"I didn't hurt it any, did I?"

Come down to the dock and look, then!"

This seemed so wholly reasonable that Tom quickly got his cap and started along with Grange.

All was quiet and deserted as they neared the dock. Grange, in moody silence, pointed down into the standing-room.

"Get down there and look!" he commanded.

Tom obeyed, Grange's accusing finger pointing into the cabin.

In the next second two pairs of brawny arms reached out of that darkness.

Tom was seized and caught, and a hard hand held over his mouth, ere he could realize what treachery was afloat.

"Bring him up on the dock," rang Grange's low, ugly voice. "Kill him if he makes a sound!"

Tom had just faith enough in the piratical nature of Grange and his crew not to risk his life by making any sound.

"We've got just a few questions we'll ask you, after you're tied," growled Grange. "Don't talk until then."

Dazed and wondering, Tom, feeling wholly helpless on this lonely water front at night, kept quiet while his wrists and ankles were tied.

Then, to his amazement, the Italian member of the crew brought out of the cabin a long, strong sack.

This was quickly drawn up over the boy's body, and tied securely at his neck.

Not, though, before two iron weights of at least forty pounds had been dropped into the sack.

"Hold on!" he dared to protest. "This is carrying a joke a heap too far."

"You're just about to discover that this ain't no joke," cried Cap Grange, in a rage. "Now, where's that black box you sneaked off this boat?"

"Black——"

"Black box, I said," raged Grange. "You took it away."

You was seen doing it. Now, you tell me where I can go and find it—or down goes this bag—you in it!—to the bottom of the ocean!”

“But I didn’t take any black box off this boat! I don’t know anything about such a thing!” gasped Tom.

“Don’t try to lie. Your life will be the cost, if you do!”

“But I’m not lying. I don’t know what you’re talking about!” protested the bewildered boy.

“You took that box away!” insisted Grange, in a bulldog growl. “You was seen to do it.”

“Who saw me?”

“Josh Darby.”

In an instant Tom guessed much of the truth, though what the box could be he had not the faintest idea.

“Where’s the box?” Grange roared.

“I give you my word of honor I don’t know anything about it.”

“Is that your last word?” snarled the big, chin-whiskered ruffian.

“It’s the only word I can give you.”

“Up and aboard with him!” squalled Cap Grange, motioning his men to pick up Tom in the weighted sack. “When the sack rots the fish’ll get him!”

Tom didn’t whimper, but demanded, coolly:

“Is it worth while to utter a last word of straight truth?”

For answer he was dumped into the cabin.

He shouted for help, but the creaking of the halyards and sheets drowned his voice. Then the Scud shot out into the bay.

“I guess that’s the last of Tom Radcliffe,” shook Josh Darby, from his hiding-place near by. “It’s fearful, but the only way. Now, I can get the best of the boy’s mother over the options all right. Good-bye, Tom!”

CHAPTER VII.

WHEN TOM’S HEART SANK.

Though Tom Radcliffe was utterly bewildered and wholly frightened by this sudden, sinister outrage against himself, he did not propose to lose his self-control altogether.

“Black box?” he repeated to himself for the dozenth time. “What is Cap Grange talking about? Was it something of value on this boat? Does he think I found it and carried it off. And Josh Darby saw me with it? Then Josh Darby himself must have taken it, and this is his mean scheme for getting even with me!”

At first, Tom only recollected only his fights with the Darbys.

But it did not seem probable that either father or son would risk his being murdered for any petty grudge.

Then a deeper thought struck the frightened boy:

“Can Josh have found out about those options? Gracious! That must be it! Josh would commit murder, or sell his soul or his country for a few thousand dollars! Yes, yes! Now, I understand! Oh, dear! Can’t I manage to make Cap Grange believe me?”

Swallowing hard, and trying to steady his voice, Tom bellowed out:

“Cap Grange!”

“What is it?” bellowed the scoundrel, poking his head down the hatchway.

“I want to talk to you. I’ve got to.”

“Oho! Going to tell me what you did with that box?”

“I can’t, for I don’t anything about it. But——”

“Shut up, then!” came the hoarse command. “It’s overboard for you!”

“But, Captain Grange——”

Smack! went the hatchway, tight as a drum-head.

“Whew! But this is getting serious!” faltered the boy. “That scoundrel Grange won’t believe me, and he doesn’t care what he does when his blood’s up!”

Now, indeed, Tom began to believe that he was doomed to go down to the very bottom of Davy Jones’s locker.

“I won’t do that, either, if I can help it!” he gritted, desperately.

It was the Swede, Dalsen, who had tied his wrists.

Now Tom began to try, desperately, to see what could be done with those wrists.

Beneath him, as he lay there, struggling, he heard the trickling run of water under the keel.

That same water was to be his grave unless something of the most lucky description turned up!

That thought nerved him to superhuman cunning and strength.

The Swede’s fingers had been rather clumsy.

After five minutes of twisting and struggling, Tom Radcliffe had the huge joy of getting his wrists apart.

His feet, however, were still tied, and all his movements were hampered in that sack.

Only by dint of great patience did he succeed in getting his right hand into his trousers’ pocket. His fingers touched his pocket-knife.

His heart, beating suffocatingly, Tom listened for a moment before he began to slit the bag down.

He was free of it, at last. Then his feet enjoyed the freedom that a slashing of the cords brought.

“But if they come in on me, I’m in a pretty pickle!” groaned the boy.

“I’ve got the knife, but I’m no match for those fellows!”

As he groped about the cabin in the dark Tom discovered two or three things.

The first was that the forward end of the cabin was fitted as a tiny cooking galley, with a stove, some cooks-pots and a rack of dishes.

Beyond this, there was a galley door forward, that let out upon the deck.

And, hanging against the wall was a round life preserver.

“Why, this will be easy enough,” throbbed Tom, “if only I could get to the deck unseen, and overboard.”

Desperately he adjusted the life preserver under his shoulders.

“It’ll be worth while to make the try,” he groaned. “If

I fail, the worst that can happen is to be killed. That's just what I'll get if I stay here."

Cautiously, the boy opened the galley door and peered out.

None of the crew of the boat were forward.

Stealthily the boy crept out on the short length of deck between the door and the mast.

He did not dare to raise his head, but, lying on his side, he looked astern and listened.

He could see none of the three men, so assumed that they must all be seated in the standing-room.

"This is a now-or-never job!" quavered the boy. "I may just as well have it over with, and know the worst."

The bay was much calmer than it had been at the time of the wreck of the Magic.

There was just a good sea running now, nothing more.

A moment of swift calculation.

Then, chancing all on the single effort, Tom rolled swiftly to the weather rail.

A breathless interval. Then, flop!

Tom was overboard, fighting to prevent himself from being drawn under by the suction of the moving boat.

He bobbed against the hull, high out of water on this weather side.

Then, with a sigh of ecstasy he fell off astern.

The Scud keeled on through the night, leaving the boy alone, bobbing on the waters just where the bay joined the ocean.

"Thank heaven!" cried the boy, fervently.

Then, after a look to get his bearings, he uttered, drily:

"This is easy! Nothing to do but swim between two and three miles! And—oh, gracious!—the chance that, when they discover I'm gone, the Scud will sail back over the same course and they'll pick me up!"

The thought was enough to make the boy strike out strongly, almost desperately toward the distant shore.

After a few minutes, however, he was obliged to rest and float.

With the tide not yet well started on the flood, it was hard work, indeed, to swim all that distance.

By this time the Scud was well out, lost in the darkness of the night.

"Wouldn't I just like a sight of Cap Grange's face when he finds I'm gone!" chuckled the boy. "No, I wouldn't either, though! And I've got to keep well out of his way, after this, too. Grange isn't the kind of man to let a grudge sleep."

Again our hero took to swimming, discouraged with the slowness of his progress.

This time he swam as long as he could, but, when he rested, was discouraged by the calculation that he had not yet covered a third of the distance to shore.

"Hanged if Greenport doesn't look further off than ever!" he muttered, gazing wistfully at the distant lights of the village.

And now, looking back seaward, he saw a bobbing mast-head light.

"Is that the Scud?" he thrilled, growing almost sick with sudden fear. "If so, it's about up with me! She's headed right on. Thank goodness she's far enough away so that I can strike out of her course."

Turning, Tom swam on a line parallel with the shore.

It was not long before he discovered that the on-coming craft had a fore-and-aft rig.

"A schooner? Why, then, confound it, that's not the Scud! Glory!—if I can reach her!"

Turning in the water, Radcliffe, striking out hard, made strong efforts to get in the path of the port-making craft.

Despite the briskness of the breeze, the schooner was making slow headway.

"It's a yacht," discovered the boy. "Her lines show that. Skipper must be strange to Greenport, so he's making in slowly."

"And a quarter—seven!" rang a loud voice.

"Sounding his way in, that skipper is," murmured the hard-swimming boy. "With seven fathoms of water under his keel, I hope the skipper won't get reckless and scoot in before I can get over there!"

Onward, for perhaps two hundred yards, Tom swam.

Now, he judged, he was as near to the schooner as he could get.

"Schooner ahoy! Help!" Radcliffe bawled. "Help! I'm overboard!"

"Who's that hailing?" yelled a voice, and Tom saw a man leap to the rail of the trim-looking schooner.

"Man overboard, out here in the water. Pick me up, please!"

Hurried orders rang out on the schooner's deck. Then she hove to.

"Where are you?" came the hail. "Keep calling."

Tom felt wholly satisfied with life when he saw a boat put off from the schooner yacht's side.

His voice guided the boat's crew.

In a few moments Tom found himself being hauled into the gig.

Two minutes later he was aboard the yacht, being stared at by a curious skipper and an equally curious owner.

"What happened, lad?" demanded the skipper.

"Fell overboard from a fishing boat," Tom replied.

"Couldn't make anybody hear, but I must have knocked a life preserver over, too, when I went, and so I didn't go to the locker."

"Humph!" grunted the skipper, as if this explanation didn't explain. Then:

"You must know this harbor, lad."

"I do."

"How's the depth of water?"

"How much do you draw, captain?"

"Eight and a half feet."

"You don't have to keep that man up forward with the sounding lead any more then," laughed Radcliffe. "With a draught of only eight and a half feet you can almost run up on the beach on this bay. Why, you can move right

in and tie up to the dock. There's sixteen feet of water at low tide, off the end of the dock."

"Maybe you can pilot us in," hinted the captain.

"Sure I can," agreed the boy.

The owner, a stout, pleasant-looking, red-faced man of middle age, who had stood by smoking his cigar, now walked away.

Tom stood by the captain, helping the latter to guide the schooner yacht for the deck.

A few minutes later a landing was made at the dock.

Now, the owner, his fog coat laid aside, came out on deck.

"You're not coming aboard again to-night, Mr. Hume?" asked the skipper.

"No, captain; I shall stay at Mr. Crane's."

Hume! The mention of that name brought much back to Tom.

Dripping and chilled as the boy was, he didn't hurry home, but walked slowly across the dock, close to the yacht's owner.

"So you're Mr. Hume?" began Tom.

"Yes; that's my name, lad."

"I believe you're the real estate man that Mr. Crane expects," hinted Tom. "You've come down here to help him arrange for some property."

"What do you know about me, or think you know?" questioned Mr. Hume, stopping and looking keenly at the boy.

"Why, I know what you're down here for, Mr. Hume. You're to arrange the best prices you can on the bay shore farms that Mr. Crane and his friends want. That being the case, I expect to see a good deal of you, Mr. Hume."

"Why?" shot out the real estate man.

"Well," smiled the boy, "happening to get wind of what was up, I've taken the trouble to get control of those farms. You'll have to deal with me, I suppose."

"You?"

"Well, the options are in my mother's name, but I'm handling the deal," Tom rejoined, as modestly as he could. "I'm the one you'll have to deal with if you want any bay frontage for Crane and his friends."

"Is that so?" asked Hume, smiling. "How many of the shore farms do you control?"

"The whole eleven that your people want to get."

"What are you asking?"

Promptly as could be Tom Radcliffe shot out the price: "Ninety-five thousand dollars!"

Mr. Hume's eyes twinkled in a most tantalizing way as he inquired:

"Did you pay money for the options that you claim to have?"

"Of course I did, Mr. Hume."

"Then I'm very much afraid you've thrown some good money away, Mr.——"

"Tom Radcliffe is my name."

"Radcliffe, I hope you're not going to be terribly disappointed. Good-night!"

Hume walked briskly away, leaving Tom with a fast-sinking heart.

"His eyes seemed to be mocking me," quivered the boy. "What does it all mean? Oh, patience, Tom, old chap! You'll find out if you wait a little!"

In the warm summer air Tom's drenched clothing dried during his brisk walk home.

"I seem bound to get in the water to-day, mother," he laughed. "I just slipped in off a boat. But I'm almost dry. I don't need to change now."

Then Tom put in his time walking about the yard for nearly an hour.

He had much to think over and puzzle out.

At the end of that time, with matters not much better solved, he espied the light of an automobile coming down the street.

The machine slowed as it neared his front gate.

Then he heard a voice demand:

"Is this where young Radcliffe lives?"

"Yes," replied the voice of Digby Crane.

"Oh, Radcliffe! At home?" hailed Mr. Hume, through the darkness.

Tom ran swiftly out to the machine.

"This," smiled Hume, turning to Mr. Crane, "is the young Croesus who informed me that he had secured control of the bay frontage."

"I do control it," Tom repeated, solemnly.

"That being the case, my young friend," Hume went on, in a kindly, good-natured voice, "I advise you to retrench on your investment, if there is yet time. I am at liberty to tell you, now, something that I couldn't mention until I had seen my people. I have secured a big tract of sea frontage elsewhere, and Mr. Crane and his friends have decided that they don't want the Greenport property."

"Don't want it?" echoed Tom, aghast, all his dreams of wealth toppling in an instant.

"No; I'm sorry if you've been bitten at all, my lad. Maybe you can get the option money back, or sell the options to someone else, if you didn't mention too generous prices in those options. I thought it only right and good-natured to stop and tell you this. I'm off now on the late train to close the deal for the other property. My yacht goes back in the morning. I must hurry, now, so as not to miss my train. I'm sorry for you, Radcliffe, and hope you'll find some profitable way out. Good night!"

The auto was gone with a whirr, leaving Tom Radcliffe looking dazed.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE MYSTERY OF THE DEEP.

"Now," began Ted Denton, settling himself back on the cushions of the sloop's standing-room seats, "if you think the time has come you can give me some sort of hint of what's what?"

It was late in the forenoon of the next day.

Several things had happened.

In the first place, early in the morning, the late skipper

of the wrecked and burned steamer, Magic, had rounded up the youngsters and had taken them down to the hotel.

There, in the presence of the passengers and crew, Captain Marston had made a neat, brief little speech of thanks for the heroism of the boys on a rough sea, and had wound up by handing them a purse of reward—more than two hundred dollars.

Right on top of this Tom had proposed a trip to the city on some of the money.

Ted had eagerly agreed, and had secured permission at home, more especially as Mrs. Radcliffe, leaving Elsie with a neighbor, was to go along.

Tom had escorted his mother and his chum to the railway station.

The news had quickly gotten about Greenport that the three were journeying cityward.

They had gone off on the train, but had left that train at another seaport station some dozen miles along the coast.

Here our hero had rented a cabin sloop for a week, had bought some provisions, and now had his little party out on the water, skirting the coast.

Ted had submitted to it all in silent wonder, but now he thought himself entitled to something like an explanation.

"I guess the best I can do, Ted, is to let you have a glimpse of the whole game," Tom proposed.

So he rapidly narrated all that had happened. Ted listened in a good deal of wonder. Mrs. Radcliffe, by this time, knew of the adventure with Cap Grange.

"So you're not going to make a stake on the shore frontage?" asked Ted, in deep disappointment, at the close.

"So Hume says."

"So he 'says'? Why, do you think he was just bluffing?"

"That's what I want to know," Tom retorted, "and what I want to find out."

"What's this trip got to do with finding out?" Ted wanted to know.

"Why, everyone in Greenport thinks we've gone to the city. If Hume was only bluffing, won't his people conclude that perhaps I've taken Hume's advice and gone to the city to look up a purchaser?"

"They may," Ted nodded. "But, see here, old fellow, those men are rich, and they can afford to wait much longer than you can."

"No, they can't," Tom retorted. "They want to begin building right away, so their homes will be ready by next summer. If they really want the Greenport land, they'll be in a hurry to get it."

"But you don't know whether they're looking for you, or not, if you sail this coast for a week."

"Won't I?" chuckled Tom. "Well, I've left behind about the best one of all to keep his mouth shut and keep me posted."

"Who?"

"Joe Atterbury."

"Is he on this job?"

"He is, and at good pay."

"Well, you can certainly depend on Joe. But does he know where to send word to you?"

"I'll telephone him every night, and give an assumed name, so that Central won't know who's calling Joe up."

"That's not a bad scheme, as far as it goes."

"More than that," Tom went on, "Joe will get letters from me, dated in the city. He'll show those letters when they'll do any good."

"Oh, I begin to see," grinned Ted.

"So I think," predicted Tom, "that we'll all three enjoy this week of lazy cruising. And, by that time, I'll have an idea whether Hume is bluffing, or whether he's really a dead horse."

"It's all pretty well thought out," grunted Ted. "Isn't it, Mrs. Radcliffe?"

"Tom seems to have all his father's faculty for such things," replied our hero's mother.

"And Tom's going to win out—somewhere—something," prophesied Ted Denton.

"I hope so," replied Mrs. Radcliffe, softly.

"In the meantime," Tom proposed, joyously, "I'm going to get all the fun that can be had out of this week of solid cruising comfort. We'll put in every night for news by 'phone, and sleep at anchorage. Oh, it'll be a week of famous fun, even if it doesn't bring fortune!"

"It's good to be out here," declared Ted, glancing first at the coast a mile away, and then out over the broad Atlantic. "But it makes a fellow fearfully hungry to be out on the water!"

"I suppose that's a hint for me to go below, and see what there is in the way of luncheon," smiled Mrs. Radcliffe.

"I'll go with you, and light the fire in the galley stove," volunteered Ted, so readily that Tom laughed aloud in his enjoyment.

After all, money or no money, it was huge fun to be out here on the water for a solid week.

They cruised and ate, and ate and cruised, through that golden summer day.

In the afternoon Tom ran a few miles out to sea. Just as he was about to return to the coast a calm fell upon them.

They lay there, slowly drifting on the motionless water, until a half an hour before dark.

"I won't get so far out again," grumbled Tom, as he finished his supper and watched the cloudless sky.

But just then there came a puff, a rocking.

"Breeze!" sang out Ted.

"Thank goodness," breathed Mrs. Radcliffe.

Tom, now, with a not very taut sheet, shaped his course toward a bay that he knew to be a few miles to the northward.

Inshore, for some time, they had made out the sail of another sloop, which was too far away for a good glimpse to be had of the hull.

But now, slowly, under the freshening breeze, the two craft came gradually closer.

"Why," throbbed Ted, the first to make the discovery, "that's the Scud!"

"So it is!" gulped Tom. "Gracious! We've got to stand away from that pirate!"

He steered again out into the open sea, hoping thus to keep away from Cap Granger, who, our hero hoped, had not yet recognized him.

"What's happening aboard the Scud?" demanded Ted, suddenly.

"Jupiter! It's a fight!" blazed Tom, after a swift look.

"It's a mutiny—that's what it is," exclaimed Denton. "The Swede and the Italian are attacking Grange! There! There goes the Swede down, and Grange has drawn a gun, looks like, on the Italian."

Whatever the trouble was aboard the Scud, that craft, just before dark, was observed to be putting in for shore.

"They didn't recognize us, then," sighed Tom, in great relief. "I'm mighty glad they had their own troubles to take up their minds."

It would be dreadful for such people to overhaul us out here on the broad ocean!" shuddered Tom's mother.

The fresher breeze was beginning to die out again, coming now only in puffs.

"We're as likely as not to put in a night out here on the deep water, after all," grumbled Tom, sitting listlessly by the wheel.

Ted, to stretch his legs, walked forward, standing by the mast.

The sight of a steamer's lights, a couple of miles away, recalled Tom to their duties.

"Get the masthead light and run it up, Ted," he called. "We don't care to be run down and sunk while lying here helpless."

The tackle rattled on the stillness of the night as the lantern was run up into its place.

There was just wind enough now to make headway secure.

Tom kept his eye on the distant port, resolved to make use of every breath of air toward reaching anchorage.

"I wish that craft over there could spare us a little of its steam power," he murmured to his mother.

"What's that chap over there doing with a yard-arm light?" called Ted, suddenly, and pointing at the steamer, which was drawing nearer.

"Seems to be signaling," replied Tom, curiously. "It can't be to us, anyway."

"I'll see," grinned Ted, mischievously.

Seizing the rope of their own masthead light tackle, he moved the lantern up and down repeatedly.

"Why, I believe they are answering us from that steamer," cried Tom. "What on earth can it mean?"

"I'll keep on, and see if I can find out," laughed Ted, making the lantern dance a jig near the masthead.

"Jupiter! They're steaming closer to us!" muttered Tom. "What on earth do they take us for?"

"One would almost think they were trying to run us down," grumbled Ted, as, in the blackness of the night,

the steamer moved closer and closer. "But here comes some wind. We can get out of the steamer's path now."

"I don't want to get away," retorted Captain Tom, easing off his sheet. "I'm getting curious to know what that steamer's skipper thinks we are."

As the steamer, a tramp craft of some three thousand tons, came closer, Tom found it necessary to haul in his sheet and use more headway in order to be sure of keeping his own little craft out of harm's way.

Suddenly over the water came the hail:

"Scud, ahoy!"

"Ahoy!" Tom shouted back.

"Whew!" uttered Ted, who had come aft. "Now I think of it, this craft does look just like the Scud."

"Where's Captain Grange?" came the hail from the tramp steamer's deck.

"Below, sick, sir," answered Tom Radcliffe, on the spur of the moment.

"You're attending to things for him?"

"Yes, sir."

"Ready for the splash?"

"Yes, sir," assented Tom, wondering what it all meant.

"Stand by, then! We're going ahead," came from the tramp steamer's bridge.

There was the splash of something thrown overboard from the steamer's rail.

"See it?" came from the steamer.

"Yes, sir," Tom agreed, as he and Ted peered hard at something floating on the water between the big and the little craft.

"Get it, then!" shouted the voice from the steamer's bridge. "Good luck and good-night!"

Clang! The big tramp's engine-room bell sounded for ahead at half speed.

A hundred yards away something was floating and bobbing on the water in the tramp steamer's wake.

"Whatever it is," glowed Tom, "we'll soon know."

Ted armed himself with the boathook, while Tom, maneuvering gently, ranged alongside.

"It's a cork float," reported Ted, from the rail.

"Get it aboard."

After a couple of failures Ted succeeded in getting on the deck a big block of cork.

Attached to it was a rope made securely fast to the float.

From the other end of this rope dangled a curious package, about a foot square and nearly a foot in depth.

"Wrapped in rubber," reported Ted, bringing this package toward our hero.

In a few moments Ted Denton had the rubber wrapping off the package, which proved to contain a black box of Russia leather.

From a ring in the box dangled a key.

There were two locks on the box. Using the key, Ted opened both locks of the box, removed a lot of fine tissue paper paddings.

Then, all of a sudden, the three beholders gave a gasp in the same breath.

Rich, blazing, gleaming, glorious fire flashed up at them from the scores of little objects in the box.

There could be no mistaking.

"Diamonds!" quavered all three, in the same voice.

Diamonds these gems indeed were—a splendid, princely collection of unset gems of the finest and largest.

"Well, of all the mysteries of the deep!" gurgled Tom Radcliffe, slowly, as he blinked after the lights of the moving steamer.

CHAPTER IX.

PIRATES.

"Why, there must be a fortune there!" cried Mrs. Radcliffe.

"A fortune?" uttered Ted, drily. "Rather! We don't need any real estate deals now."

"Or wouldn't, if these diamonds were ours," replied Tom.

"Well," challenged Ted, "aren't they?"

"What right have we got to them?"

"We found them."

"True," nodded Tom, glowing. "But they weren't intended for us."

"They were chucked overboard, and we were told to pick 'em up. We obeyed orders."

"So that makes the diamonds ours?" laughed Tom. "But I'm afraid, Ted, our claim isn't quite clear. For one thing, we represented this craft to be the Scud, and we claimed that Grange was aboard. Now, these diamonds were dropped overboard on the understanding that they were to fall into Captain Grange's hands."

"But what would he be doing with 'em?" challenged Ted.

"That's so," Tom admitted.

The three people on the little sloop gazed at each other, then at the diamonds, next back into each other's eyes.

It was all such a huge puzzle.

"I'd like to think we really could claim these beauties!" throbbed Tom.

"At all events," hinted Ted, "we certainly won't give 'em up until we've thought the matter mighty well over."

"How did those diamonds come to be thrown overboard?" asked Mrs. Radcliffe. "Why were they intended for a man like Captain Grange, since he isn't wealthy enough to afford such luxuries?"

"I guess it's a case for the United States revenue people," returned Tom, drily.

"Is this a smuggling game?" breathed Ted.

"It looks like nothing else," Tom replied, taking the wheel once more. "Let us figure it out. There's a duty on such gems coming into the country. Now, dishonest skippers, sailing from the other side, can arrange with a pretended fishing vessel on this side to be on the lookout. The diamonds are securely packed, and then dropped overboard, the package being tied to a cork float. All a man like Grange has to do is to secure the cork float and haul

it aboard, with the package attached. Then, a short sail to a seaport town where there are no customs officers. With that, the diamonds are smuggled in, duty-free. Could anything be easier? Could a profit be much more easily made?"

"Then Grange, being a criminal against the United States laws, can't legally claim these diamonds," hinted Ted.

"No; he wouldn't dare to go to law about it."

"Nor would any one else."

"Then to whom do these diamonds belong?" Ted sprang, as a poser.

"As near as I can figure it," Tom replied, "these diamonds are silent evidence of a crime against the United States government. Therefore, the diamonds belong to the United States government unless an owner will come forward."

"And you're going to turn them over?" choked Ted.

"I'm going to notify the nearest customs house, at Burke Harbor, and let the government folks do as they think best."

"That seems to be the only honest course," approved Mrs. Radcliffe.

"Yes, it is the only honest thing to do," agreed Ted. "But," with a heavy sigh, "I wish it was equally honest to keep those beauties!"

Tom laughed, while Ted went on:

"When the government folks find out, I see Grange's finish."

"I see our finish," our hero retorted, soberly, "if Grange keeps at large long enough to suspect us and find us."

There was silence, mostly, after that, on the run to the harbor, some five miles an hour, where Tom had decided to pass the night.

The wind freshening, they made the run in less than an hour, coming to anchor in an almost deserted little bay some half a mile from town.

Tom hauled in the small boat towing astern, stepped in and pulled to the town.

"I got Joe on the 'phone," he reported, when he came back. "Joe has noticed no signs on the part of Crane's crowd."

"It's too early for that," suggested Ted.

"Yes; it must be."

"Did you send word to the customs folks?"

"No; the customs house would be closed at this time of the night."

"Say," put in Ted, suddenly, "you'll have to give your name to the customs people."

"I suppose so."

"And then the whole thing will get in the newspapers," tantalized Ted. "The Crane crowd will see the story, and then they'll know you're not in the city. They'll put two and two together, and wonder why you're here, when you said you were going to the city."

Tom's face fell blankly.

"I hadn't thought of that," he gasped. "Well, I'll have to think the thing out through the night."

"I feel like turning in," observed Mrs. Radcliffe, drowsily.

So the boys pulled their own mattresses and bedding out into the standing room, after which they gave up the cabin to Mrs. Radcliffe.

Lying down, Tom and Ted talked, drowsily for a while, then both fell sound asleep.

Perhaps two hours later, when the whole town was asleep, the twin searchlights of a big touring car showed on a cliff road overlooking the bay.

The three men in it made use of a night glass, looking over the bay for a few moments.

Then, turning out the lights, they hurried down to the bay, found a small boat, "borrowed" it, and rowed out to the little sloop.

"It's the Radcliffe crowd!" whispered Cap Grange, vengefully, as he caught sight of the boys' faces above the bedding.

Cautiously the Italian stole aboard first. There was the smell of chloroform in the air as he stole away from the boys to the cabin door.

A few moments later, followed by another smell of chloroform, the Italian crept out of the little cabin, grimly passing the black box to Cap Grange.

"The unhung scoundrels!" raged Grange, virtuously. "We'll fix them for this."

"The knife?" whispered the Italian, eagerly.

"No! We'll give them a sailor's grave!" uttered Grange, gruffly.

There was no need for as much silence now. The boat's dastardly crew of three made a little noise on the hull of the boat below the water.

"We've settled them for good and all," grumbled Grange, gruffly, as he ordered his men to row away from the scuttled sloop, with its chloroformed human freight. "That craft will be on the bottom in three minutes!"

CHAPTER X.

THE NIGHT OF TORMENT.

A full minute went by, during which the water crept in to a depth of several inches in the cabin.

It would soon be in the standing-room.

Tom stirred, under the influence of a bad dream.

Then, with a start, he awoke, drowsily, shivering with the dread that the dream had left upon him.

In the open air the effect of chloroform does not last long.

Tom lay blinking up at the stars, his nerve gradually coming back to him as the bad dream wore away.

"Pshaw! I'm not going to lose my night's sleep for one dream!" he grunted, and turned over to go to sleep again.

As he turned, his face was toward the cabin door.

"Why, that was closed when I went to sleep," he muttered.

He looked at the open doorway curiously.

As he was about to drop off to sleep again, Tom's nostrils were assailed by a sweetish, heavy odor.

"What's that?" he wondered, sitting up.

Looking down at his side, he found a cloth. Snatching it up, he held it to his nostrils.

"Jupiter!" he howled, jumping up.

He darted into the cabin now. Splash! His legs, almost to his knees, sloshed in the intruding water.

"Mother!" he shouted, and shook her.

But Mrs. Radcliffe, thoroughly under the influence of the strong fumes, did not rouse.

"Ted!" quivered the boy, racing out on deck.

He bent over and shook his chum, but Ted, with some of the chloroform fumes on his lungs and in his brain, stirred only stupidly.

"Ted!" panted Tom, shaking his chum again, and as hard as he could. "Rouse! We're sinking!"

Ted not doing more than to mumble, Tom took up with heroic measures.

Bink! bink! bink! Tom's heavy shoes played tattoo all over Ted's legs and body.

"Quit that!" yelled Ted, in sleepy anger.

Bink! bink! bink!

"Say," growled Ted, in an ugly mood, "quit that, or I'll get up and lick you!"

"You can't! You dassen't!" taunted Tom. Bink! bink! bink!

"I'll show you!" roared Ted, leaping up stupidly.

But Tom caught him, winding his arms around his chum.

"Ted! Don't you understand? We've been chloroformed and the sloop is sinking! Help me to get my mother out of the berth! Quick, for all our lives!"

By means of more thorough shaking, Ted's scattered, doped faculties were roused to something like working order.

He followed Tom into the cabin.

Between them they lifted Mrs. Radcliffe bodily, carrying her out, in her night clothing, wrapped in a blanket, and placing her on the seats.

"Haul that tender alongside like lightning!" roared Tom, as he turned and darted back into the rapidly filling cabin.

For just an instant he halted in his errand long enough to grope for the diamonds.

"Gone!" he gritted. "Of course! Now I know just where to look for the doer of this job."

As rapidly as he could, he seized up all of his mother's discarded clothing.

With this he dashed out into the standing-room.

The sloop had but a few moments longer to keep her rail above the water.

Ted stood with the painter of the tender alongside.

"Help me to put mother in the stern," directed Tom.

This was speedily done, her clothing being dropped into the small boat beside her.

The two boys dropped into the small boat speedily.

Tom seized an oar and shoved off. Then with both oars he rowed a hundred yards away from the sinking craft.

"We couldn't have saved the sloop," he muttered.

"We were lucky to save ourselves," chattered Ted.

"Look over there!" cried Tom, scanning the shore and espying the sudden looming out of bright twin lights on the cliff road.

Then, with a heavy jarring of machinery, the lights began to move.

"Grange has got the diamonds in his own hands, and nearly settled with us," uttered Tom, grimly.

"Thank goodness, then, he's going!" breathed Ted.

"So's the sloop—look!"

With a final plunge their late pleasure craft slipped below the waters. After a few moments only her masthead remained above the surface of the bay.

Tom, bending to the oars, his eyes on his sleeping mother's face, rowed slowly to the shore.

Just as they beached, the slight shock, backed by the fresh air, made Mrs. Radcliffe open her eyes.

After a few minutes the boys had her thoroughly revived. Then they left her to don her clothing.

"I've heard about the strenuous life, boys," she laughed, as she called them back, after dressing. "If this is a sample, I don't like it."

After a brief talk they decided to go into the town, find the hotel, and put up there for the night.

As soon as he reached his room, Tom sat down and, with Ted's help, penned a brief, anonymous letter to the Collector of the Burke Harbor Customs House.

The letter contained all the information that was needful for setting the government people hot on Cap Grange's trail.

A second letter, also unsigned, informed the owner of the scuttled sloop where he would find his craft. The letter wound up with:

"Within a few days the writer will see you and settle the bill for raising your sloop."

Tom and Ted went together to the local post-office and mailed these letters.

"What now?" asked Ted, as they returned to their room and began to undress.

"Boating is too expensive under present conditions," smiled Tom. "In the morning I think we had better run fifteen or twenty miles further up the railroad line to some very small town and stay there until things are ripe for going back to Greenport."

That was done.

Just a week later Tom, his mother and his chum alighted at Greenport from a through train.

There was a big change in the appearance of all three.

They looked as if they had been to the city, and as if they had fared well there.

All three were fashionably dressed.

There was a fourth member of their party—a dandy col-

ored man, whom Tom had found and posted. He passed as the servant of the party.

They entered a cab, the colored man riding on the box with the driver.

Their first stop was at the hotel, where Tom, known to every Greenporter, paralyzed the proprietor by registering his party and calling for a suite of rooms.

"You must have been flourishing, Tom," gasped the proprietor.

"Slightly," smiled Tom, quietly, passing over a neat, engraved card.

The card stated that he represented the Greenport Realty Improvement Company.

"What does this mean?" gasped the boniface, looking from the card to dandy Tom and his dandy party, including the dandy colored man, who stood waiting with the hand baggage of the party. "Oh, I did hear something about your mother getting some farm options."

"That's it," smiled Tom, genially. "Greenport is going to boom as a summer place after this. There's going to be big business in the dull old town."

"Who's going to do it?" questioned the landlord.

"Well, some New York capitalists are going to help out a bit," Tom answered quietly. "They'll be here to-morrow, and we'll close matters up soon. They'll take some of the land, and on the profits I'm going to have a slice myself. You'll see some astonishingly big building here before the summer is over. But I can't tell you any more, Mr. Lane, until the big plans are further along."

Tom and Ted, as soon as they found themselves alone in their suite, looked hard at each other.

"This style is taking the last dollar we had," grimaced Tom. "We can run about two days longer on the money we've got."

"Then back to the woodpile," retorted Ted, drily.

Landlord Lane didn't need any more particulars than he had received at the desk. He added the rest for himself in his hurried, gossipy flight through the main street.

Inside of an hour the excitement had spread.

The farmers whose options Tom held flocked to the hotel.

Tom met them all with a smiling face, assuring them that the options would be speedily cashed in.

Some of the farmers now put on long faces, hinting that they really ought to receive more for their farms.

"Gentlemen," spoke Tom, briskly, "the profit belongs to the man with the brains. You're all getting fifty per cent. more than your places were worth a fortnight ago. That's being generous enough with you. The rest of the profit goes where it belongs—to the promoters."

"It's a shame," growled out Farmer Brent. "With all the money that's going, we ought to get more of it. We furnish the land, don't we?"

"A week ago you would have been tickled to death to sell for what you're now getting," Tom retorted.

"I'm going to see my lawyer about that option," grunted Brent. "I'm not going to sell at any such price as you've got me down for, if the lawyer can find any way out of it."

"Run right along and see your lawyer," Tom advised, cheerfully.

Then he dismissed the farmers who had thronged his suite by hinting that his party wanted their supper.

By the time that the two boys were alone Tom's face looked almost haggard.

"We're playing our last card now, Ted," he whispered. "If the bluff doesn't work on the Crane crowd we're done for."

"I can hardly believe that it will work," Ted replied slowly. "Still, never say die, old fellow!"

"Especially after we've dropped our last dollar into the game," Tom laughed nervously.

Not a word had Uncle Sam's customs people let out concerning Cap Grange and his crew.

Tom, by his cautious queries, was able only to learn that Grange and his fellows had not been seen in town lately, and that the Scud remained at her anchorage.

"Then the customs people are on the trail, but Grange and the others got wind of it and got out in time," Tom declared to his chum.

Tom and Ted slept in adjoining rooms that night.

It was after midnight when a dark face appeared outside the open windows of our hero's room.

The owner of that dark face, Grange's Italian, listened for some time to the boy's regular breathing.

Then into the room he crept.

Again there was a smell of chloroform in the air as the Italian glided to the window and signaled silently.

In another moment Dalsen, the gloomy Swede, was in the room.

Stealthily they bound the boy and fastened a chloroform-soaked cloth over his mouth and nostrils.

A few minutes more and they had unconscious Tom Radcliffe down to the ground outside.

Swiftly they pushed the boy's body inside a long sack.

With this sack slung to a pole they stole off in the night.

It was more than an hour and a half later when Tom Radcliffe really awoke.

Bound, he was lying on the ground in the depths of a forest.

As he stirred, the Italian darted to him.

"So you are awake?" grinned the Italian. "Dalsen, our funny little fellow is awake."

"Awake, is he?" growled the Swede, lumbering over and looking down at the captive. "That is good. I tank I start for Cap Grange now. I tank our boy, maybe, sleep much time after Cap Grange see him!"

Then the Swede's heavy feet crunched in the underbrush as he strode away.

CHAPTER XI.

TOM HURLS OUT THE STRAIGHT TRUTH.

"Why couldn't you minda your own business?" growled the Italian, seating himself beside our hero. "You spoila da good business for us."

"How?" asked Tom, with pretended innocence.

"You senda da customs folks after us. We nearly get caught," scowled the Italian.

"I did—what?" gasped Tom.

"Oh, that all right. Bluff is no good," snapped the boy's captor. "We know what you do. No good lie!"

The fellow reached inside his vest with a gesture so threatening that Tom decided not to talk any more than he had to.

"Oh, Cap Grange, he fixa you all right," growled the fellow, letting his hand fall again. "He is mad all the way through with you, Cap Grange."

"I've got my life to think of now," shuddered the boy. "Grange isn't the kind of man to balk at a killing. I'll be it, too, if I don't hurry up and think out some good line of talk."

Tom's mind burned actively for the next two hours.

Then came the crunching of the heavy-footed Swede through the underbrush once more. He was followed by his leader.

Cap Grange stood looking down at the boy for a moment before he uttered:

"Huh!"

Tom charged straight to the point.

"What have you gone to all this trouble for, Cap Grange?" he demanded.

"You've been breaking in on us and stealing our goods. And you've warned the customs folks and spoiled a good thing."

"See here," demanded Tom, briskly, "why do you think you've got any fault to find? If anybody tried to scuttle your boat while you were asleep on it wouldn't you do anything you could to make things warm for that party?"

"Then you admit, Radcliffe, that you sent words to the customs people?"

"Yes, I did," Tom hurled out the straight truth. "But that was after you had tried to kill me, and my mother and my friend with me."

"We could have killed you all as you slept," growled Grange. "I'm sorry we didn't."

"And now," hurled out Tom, "you have the cheek to ask me why I set the officers on your track."

"Anyway," sneered Grange, "you can't claim you had any grudge against me the night the Magic burned—that is, when you stole that box of diamonds from their hiding-place in the cabin of the Scud."

"And I didn't take any diamonds that night, either," Tom maintained.

"Oh, you liar!"

"What makes you think I took them?"

"Didn't Josh Darby himself tell me he had seen you going ashore in a hurry with a long black box?"

"And you never had the brains to think that Darby got 'em himself!" sneered the boy.

Grange started and looked somewhat thoughtful.

"You follow him up, as you've followed me up," chal-

lenged Tom Radcliffe, "and you'll get from Darby what you'll never get from me—your diamonds."

Cap Grange scowled, but made no answer to this proposition.

Instead, he looked around at the Swede and the Italian, and then finally back at Radcliffe.

"At any rate, boy, you're the one that broke up our fine and big-paying game of smuggling diamonds and other things into the country. You'll have to answer for that."

"How?" demanded Tom.

"Full particulars are not forthcoming yet," grinned Cap Grange, savagely. "But you'll know the full programme in a little while."

Tom, lying on his back, watched them as the three men moved about in that darkest hour before the dawn.

All their work he could not see, but he knew that they seemed to be gathering a good deal of brush and such stuff.

The gray light was in the eastern sky when Grange and the Italian came after him.

"If every dog has his day," smirked Grange, "this is yours. Come on!"

There was no "come" about it. They lifted him, carrying him for a little distance between the trees.

They halted before a strong young sapling. To this, standing him on his feet, they tied Tom.

"Now, you git off on lookout," advised Grange, turning to the Italian.

After that the leader and his gloomy Swede laid a lot of light brush at Tom's feet. Above this they began to pile fagots, and then wood of some size.

"What on earth are you fellows up to?" challenged Tom.

"Last chance to tell us where that box of diamonds is," Grange answered, without stopping his infernal work.

"But I can't tell you, man!" throbbed Tom.

"Then we're going to burn you alive where you stand!"

CHAPTER XII.

CONCLUSION.

"Help! help!" screamed Tom, at his loudest.

"Gimme me a match, Dalsen," requested the captain.

Flare! Grange touched the little flame to the dried grass under the lowermost brush.

Crackle! Tiny flames began to shoot up, as the smallest wood ignited.

The flames were just beginning to warm the skin of his bare legs.

In another few seconds the real agony would begin.

Crack!

Cap Grange and Dalsen, who had retreated a few yards, started at the report of a pistol.

Then came the Italian's voice, shouting:

"Maka da quick sneak, Cap! Dey come!"

Another pistol-shot, and then a small volley from shot-guns, close at hand.

"Make quick time here!" shouted our hero, as the flames began to scorch. "It's I—Tom Radcliffe! They've got me tied to a tree and a fire burning under me! Quick!"

Grange and Dalsen had bolted pell-mell at the first note of warning.

Now feet sounded rushing through the underbrush of the forest.

It was lazy Sile Higgins, strange to say, who got there first.

He caught sight of Tom, saw the sprouting flames, and made a dash for the sapling.

Stamp! stamp! stamp! Dropping his empty shotgun, Sile got that budding fire out in short order.

Tom in the meantime had directed seven other men which way to go in pursuit of Grange and Dalsen.

"We didn't get here many minutes too soon," grinned Sile, as he whipped out his pocket-knife and began to slash at the cords that held the boy where he was.

"How on earth did you come to be here at all?" chattered Tom, as he stepped away, free.

"It was Millie Stuart sent our crowd up here."

"How did she come to be up at daylight?" demanded astounded Tom.

"She's been up for hours, like every one else," Sile responded.

"Like every one else?"

"Sure. The whole town has been up most of the night, lad. Oh, I tell you, Ted Denton roused every one out of bed to go on the hunt."

"Then Ted missed me?"

"Sure enough. It seems Ted had such a tough dream about you that, when he woke, he went into your room. Found no one there, of course, and nothing but the smell of chloroform. Then he roused out a lot of folks and sent 'em to roust out the rest o' the town. We've all been searching ever since. Ted told us if we found Cap Grange or either of his crew we'd know where to look for you. We sent parties out most every other way, but it was little Millie who thought of this hill road. So up we posted, and as we was coming we heard that yell of yours. Then we closed in fast.

"You don't look much like traveling," grinned Sile, looking again at Tom, who wore only the pajamas in which he had been pulled from his bed.

"Not having any shoes is the worst of it," laughed Tom. "But I'll make out to get to town."

And make out he did. While he hurried back to his suite, to greet his mother, the ringing fire bells called in the searchers.

Greenport's citizens determined not to put in more time on the trail of the Grange crowd, who were believed to be traveling away from town as fast as they could go.

By the time that Tom had finished a hasty but hearty breakfast there was a crowd before the hotel.

But Millie and her mother were the honored ones.

Tom led them up to his mother, chatted with them a few minutes, then hurried below again.

But by ten o'clock Tom was upstairs again, in a room that he and Ted had hastily converted into an office.

The dandy colored man was put out in the hallway at the door.

Then for another hour Tom and Ted waited and chafed.

Solemnly, silently, the colored man stepped into the room, laying a card in Tom's hand.

"Mr. Hume?" asked Tom, reading the card with a solemn face and quiet tone. "Tell him I shall be glad to see him for a few moments."

Then in came the real estate man, smiling and hearty.

"Just got a minute, boys," he greeted them, shaking hands with each. "I hear you are budding out in earnest in the real estate field, so I dropped in on my way to the train to extend you my congratulations. And I hear you've got buyers for your frontage here?"

"Yes," admitted Tom, coolly.

"Good! I'm glad you've panned out so well," cried Hume, beaming.

"We're going to pan out very well, I think, thank you," Tom resumed, politely.

"And since you don't want to sell to our people, you'll be glad to know that I've succeeded in suiting them. I've bought for them a very pretty tract of four thousand acres up at Dove Haven. Crane is so much taken with it that he's going to build up there. His place here in Greenport is going into the market. If you're going to keep on in real estate, perhaps you'd like to take up Crane's place for selling."

Ted began to look blue around the gills, but he had the good sense not to speak.

"I shall be very glad, indeed, to take up with Crane's property," Tom replied, "as soon as I begin to get rid of this other, bigger matter."

"We might have bought here in the first place," Hume went on, good-humoredly, "only we saw that you were disposed to ask too much. So we went elsewhere."

"You think we asked you too much, eh?" smiled Tom. "Why, further experience has shown me that you were offered the land at too low a price."

"Do you really mean to say that you're getting more than eighty-five thousand dollars?" Hume asked, looking interested.

"Ninety-five was what I asked you," Tom broke in, quietly.

"What's your real asking price for that whole bunch of property this morning?" burst out Hume.

"To be exact, Mr. Hume, my price for the eleven farms, in a lump, is just one hundred and twenty thousand dollars."

"What are you asking so much more now than you did a week ago?" demanded Hume.

"The property has risen in value."

"Well, I'm sorry, but I see I can't do any business with you," sighed Hume, taking his hat and rising.

"Gus," called Tom, also taking his hat and rising. The dandy colored man entered.

"Gus, I shan't be at home to any one to-day. Go to the office and order a buggy with a good horse. I'm going to

take my mother driving, and then we'll be at the depot to meet our party. Tell any one who calls that I can't see any one before to-morrow."

"But about this property?" asked Hume, who didn't seem now in so much of a hurry to go.

"What about the property?" asked Tom, quickly and sharply, moving toward the door.

"Well—about the price?"

"I understood that you had declined my price," said Tom, in polite surprise, "and that there was to be no further consideration of the matter."

"Will you accept the first price you named—ninety-five thousand dollars?"

"I wouldn't even think of doing it," Tom replied, promptly.

"A hundred thousand?"

"No, sir!"

"One hundred and five, then? That's my top price."

"Not worth talking about," yawned Tom. "And you won't think me rude, will you, Mr. Hume? I mustn't keep my mother waiting."

"Confound you!" roared Hume, all his bland good-nature fading. "Will you even stick to your price of a minute ago—one hundred and twenty thousand dollars?"

"For the next minute or so, perhaps," Tom admitted.

"Oh, I'd have to have two or three days to talk it over with my people," urged Hume.

"And in a little over an hour I meet my other buyers," drawled Tom. "So, you see, it won't be any use to talk it over with Crane and his friends."

"I'm not used to rushing a deal like this," cried Hume, testily. "But will you wait until I see whether I can get any of my people on the telephone?"

"I'll wait five minutes," Tom agreed. "But I can't give up that drive."

"Oh, hang the drive!" blurted his visitor. "You wait here a few minutes, and I'll see what can be done over the telephone."

"By the way," drawled Tom, after him, "I shall expect the first fifty thousand dollars of the purchase money to-day, before bank closes, or the price will be off, anyway."

Hume hurried away, grumbling under his breath.

"Oh, I hope they take it," came in a groaning whisper from Ted.

"The sale is made," replied Tom, coolly.

"Crane and his crowd may back out."

"They won't. Hume's asking them over the 'phone is only a matter of form. He knows thoroughly at this moment how high they're willing to go."

Hume came back, perspiring freely.

"Mr. Crane and one or two of his friends will be here at two o'clock, and I think——" began Hume.

"But you knew that I wouldn't be here at two o'clock," Tom interrupted, coolly.

"Not even to make the sale?"

Mr. Hume, unless I can honestly say that I've made an

actual sale, then I shall be obliged to give my New York parties the first chance."

"But Crane can't get here this morning."

"If he can't get here in half an hour, with his check-book, and ready to sign the papers, then, honestly, Mr. Hume, it doesn't seem to me that he has one chance in a hundred of getting the Greenport bay frontage."

"Oh ——!"

The second word that Hume jerked out was a profane one. He followed this by saying:

"I'll go to the 'phone again and see what can be done."

Hume was back in two minutes, saying:

"Crane and two of his friends are on their way here in the auto, but Crane is mad and cranky about your way of treating him."

"It'll hardly do for Mr. Crane to get very cranky until he has the papers all drawn up and signed," interposed Tom, mildly. "And I suppose you understand, Mr. Hume, that if the papers aren't completed, and the certified checks in my hand before it's time to go to the train, then the deal is all off?"

"But there's no bank in this town to certify checks," protested Hume.

"You're right. But there's a way of arranging with a bank by telephone that's almost as good as certifying checks," Tom hinted. "Now, don't you think it would be a good trick to hustle out and get a lawyer and his typewriter in here, so as to have the paper drawn up in record time?"

Hume departed on the rush. Tom turned to smile at Ted, but said nothing.

In just twenty minutes the papers had been drawn up, Crane and his friends had signed with Mrs. Radcliffe, and Crane, Hume, Tom and Ted were on their way by fast auto to the nearest bank, where Tom's big check was cashed for him, since his mother had endorsed the check to him.

This money Tom deposited in his own name, and the party returned.

In the early afternoon revenue officers came in with Cap Grange and his two accomplices.

They also brought with them Josh Darby, who was rather badly crippled.

The three had caught Darby driving over a lonely road.

They had tied him to a sapling, as they had done with Tom, and lighted a fire under him.

This was to force Darby to tell where the diamonds were that he had taken from the Scud's cabin.

Revenue officers who were searching that section heard Darby's shrieks, and closed in on the whole crowd.

It was the revenue officers to whom Josh afterward turned over the diamonds.

Cap Grange and his accomplices are now serving long terms as Federal prisoners. Josh Darby will always be somewhat lame from the roasting of sinews in his left leg.

He closed out his business and property interests in Greenport and moved away. Neither Josh nor his son have been heard from since.

But Tom, when the whole deal was through, paid for the raising of that sunken sloop; he paid Joe Atterbury the handsome sum of one thousand dollars, and Ted got five thousand.

As soon as Joe acquired his money he kept his promise to his mysterious benefactor, J. D. Enclosing two hundred dollars in an envelope, he sent it to the general delivery of the New York post-office, with a letter of grateful thanks and a brief explanation of how he employed the money to get the best of Darby. In due time he got an unsigned answer to his letter saying that the money was received.

The rest of a very handsome fortune Tom Radcliffe kept for himself, his mother and sister, until, later on, Millie Stuart, too, became a member of the Radcliffe family.

By that time, however, our hero had made a few more small "killings" in real estate and other ventures, though he is no longer compelled to operate "on a shoestring."

Ted has won a very tidy fortune with that first start of five thousand, and Joe has done almost as well on a start of one-fifth as much.

About three months after the sale of the shore frontage Tom encountered Hume one day.

"By the way," said Tom, innocently, "if you haven't done anything definite with that Dove Haven frontage, I might like to look into it with you."

"Don't you know a bluff when you hear one?" demanded Hume, grinning. "There isn't any such place as Dove Haven."

"No?" asked Tom, in affected surprise. "I never heard from my New York parties, either. They must have gone to Dove Haven by mistake."

Mr. Hume stood staring after the young speculator as Tom strolled slowly down the street.

"Huh!" grunted Hume. "I used to think I was slick. I see, now, that I am the Easiest Ever!"

THE END.

"IN THE SULTAN'S EYE; OR, BEATING THE PORTE'S GAME," is the title of a masterly story of an American boy's part in a great plot in Constantinople. This wonderful, mysterious, adventure-full tale, by Tom Dawson, will be published complete in No. 31 of The Wide Awake Weekly, out next week! Every reader is cautioned to begin this story in the daytime, as if he begins it in the evening hours he will be sure to stay up most of the night in order to finish it! Out next week! Look for it!

SPECIAL NOTICE: All back numbers of this weekly are always in print. If you cannot obtain them from any newsdealer, send the price in money or postage stamps by mail to FRANK TOUSEY, PUBLISHER, 24 UNION SQUARE, NEW YORK, and you will receive the copies you order by return mail.

THE LIBERTY BOYS OF '76

A Weekly Magazine containing Stories of the American Revolution.

By HARRY MOORE.

These stories are based on actual facts and give a faithful account of the exciting adventures of a brave band of American youths who were always ready and willing to imperil their lives for the sake of helping along the gallant cause of Independence. Every number will consist of 32 large pages of reading matter, bound in a beautiful colored cover.

LATEST ISSUES:

- | | |
|--|--|
| 239 The Liberty Boys at Perth Amboy; or, Franklin's Tory Son. | 273 The Liberty Boys at Brier Creek; or, Chasing the Enemy. |
| 240 The Liberty Boys and the "Midget"; or, Good Goods in a Small Package. | 274 The Liberty Boys and the Mysterious Frenchman; or, The Secret Messenger of King Louis. |
| 241 The Liberty Boys at Frankfort; or, Routing the "Queen's Rangers." | 275 The Liberty Boys after the "Pine Robbers"; or, The Monmouth County Marauders. |
| 242 The Liberty Boys and General Lacey; or, Cornered at the "Crooked Billet." | 276 The Liberty Boys and General Pickens; or, Chastising the Cherokees. |
| 243 The Liberty Boys at the Farewell Fete; or, Frightening the British With Fire. | 277 The Liberty Boys at Blackstock's; or, The Battle of Tyger River. |
| 244 The Liberty Boys' Gloomy Time; or, Darkest Before Dawn. | 278 The Liberty Boys and the "Busy Bees"; or, Lively Work all Round. |
| 245 The Liberty Boys on the Neuse River; or, Campaigning in North Carolina. | 279 The Liberty Boys and Emily Geiger; or, After the Tory Scouts. |
| 246 The Liberty Boys and Benedict Arnold; or, Hot Work With a Traitor. | 280 The Liberty Boys' 200-Mile Retreat; or, Chased from Catawba to Virginia. |
| 247 The Liberty Boys Excited; or, Doing Whirlwind Work. | 281 The Liberty Boys' Secret Orders; or, The Treason of Lee. |
| 248 The Liberty Boys' Odd Recruit; or, The Boy Who Saw Fun in Everything. | 282 The Liberty Boys and the Hidden Avenger; or, The Masked Man of Kipp's Bay. |
| 249 The Liberty Boys' Fair Friend; or, The Woman Who Helped. | 283 The Liberty Boys at Spring Hill; or, After Cluny the Traitor. |
| 250 The Liberty Boys "Stumped"; or, The Biggest Puzzle of All. | 284 The Liberty Boys and Rebecca Mottes; or, Fighting With Fire Arrows. |
| 251 The Liberty Boys in New York Bay; or, Difficult and Dangerous Work. | 285 The Liberty Boys' Gallant Charge; or, The Bayonet Fight at Old Tappan. |
| 252 The Liberty Boys' Own Mark; or, Trouble for the Tories. | 286 The Liberty Boys' Daring Raid; or, Hot Times at Verplanck's Point. |
| 253 The Liberty Boys at Newport; or, The Rhode Island Campaign. | 287 The Liberty Boys and Simon Kenton; or, Fighting the British on the Ohio. |
| 254 The Liberty Boys and "Black Joe"; or, The Negro Who Helped. | 288 The Liberty Boys Beaten; or, Fighting at "Cock Hill" Fort. |
| 255 The Liberty Boys Hard at Work; or, After the Marauders. | 289 The Liberty Boys and Major Kelly; or, The Brave Bridge-Cutter. |
| 256 The Liberty Boys and the "Shirtmen"; or, Helping the Virginia Riflemen. | 290 The Liberty Boys' Deadshot Band; or, General Wayne and the Mutineers. |
| 257 The Liberty Boys at Fort Nelson; or, The Elizabeth River Campaign. | 291 The Liberty Boys at Fort Schuyler; or, The Idiot of German Flats. |
| 258 The Liberty Boys and Captain Betts; or, Trying to Down Tryon. | 292 The Liberty Boys Out With Herkimer; or, Fighting the Battle of Oriskany. |
| 259 The Liberty Boys at Bemis Heights; or, Helping to Beat Burgoyne. | 293 The Liberty Boys and Moll Pitcher; or, The Brave Woman Gunner. |
| 260 The Liberty Boys and the "Little Rebels"; or, The Boys Who Bothered the British. | 294 The Liberty Boys' Bold Dash; or, The Skirmish at Peekskill Bay. |
| 261 The Liberty Boys at New London; or, The Fort Griswold Massacre. | 295 The Liberty Boys and Rochambeau; or, Fighting with French Allies. |
| 262 The Liberty Boys and Thomas Jefferson; or, How They Saved the Governor. | 296 The Liberty Boys at Staten Island; or, Spying Upon the British. |
| 263 The Liberty Boys Banished; or, Sent Away by General Howe. | 297 The Liberty Boys With Putnam; or, Good Work in the Nutmeg State. |
| 264 The Liberty Boys at the State Line; or, Desperate Doings on the Dan River. | 298 The Liberty Boys' Revenge; or, Punishing the Tories. |
| 265 The Liberty Boys' Terrible Trip; or, On Time in Spite of Everything. | 299 The Liberty Boys at Dunderberg; or, The Fall of the Highland Forts. |
| 266 The Liberty Boys' Setback; or, Beset by Redcoats, Redskins, and Tories. | 300 The Liberty Boys with Wayne; or, Daring Deeds at Stony Point. |
| 267 The Liberty Boys and the Swede; or, The Scandinavian Recruit. | 301 The Liberty Boys as Cavalry Scouts; or, The Charge of Washington's Brigade. |
| 268 The Liberty Boys' "Best Licks"; or, Working Hard to Win. | 302 The Liberty Boys on Island 6; or, The Patriot of the Delaware. |
| 269 The Liberty Boys at Rocky Mount; or, Helping General Sumter. | 303 The Liberty Boys' Gallant Stand; or, Rounding up the Redcoats. |
| 270 The Liberty Boys and the Regulators; or, Running the Royalists to Cover. | 304 The Liberty Boys Outflanked; or, The Battle of Fort Mifflin. |
| 271 The Liberty Boys after Fenton; or, The Tory Desperado. | 305 The Liberty Boys' Hot Fight; or, Cutting Their Way to Freedom. |
| 272 The Liberty Boys and Captain Falls; or, The Battle of Ramsour's Mills. | 306 The Liberty Boys' Night Attack; or, Fighting the Johnson Greens. |

For sale by all newsdealers, or will be sent to any address on receipt of price, 5 cents per copy, in money or postage stamps, by
FRANK TOUSEY, Publisher, 24 Union Square, New York

IF YOU WANT ANY BACK NUMBERS

of our Libraries and cannot procure them from newsdealers, they can be obtained from this office direct. Cut out and fill in the following Order Blank and send it to us with the price of the books you want and we will send them to you by return mail. POSTAGE STAMPS TAKEN THE SAME AS MONEY.

FRANK TOUSEY, Publisher, 24 Union Square, New York.190

DEAR SIR—Enclosed find.....cents for which please send me:

....copies of WORK AND WIN, Nos.....
.... " " WIDE AWAKE WEEKLY, Nos.....
.... " " FAME AND FORTUNE WEEKLY, Nos.....
.... " " WILD WEST WEEKLY, Nos.....
.... " " THE LIBERTY BOYS OF '76, Nos.....
.... " " PLUCK AND LUCK, Nos.....
.... " " SECRET SERVICE, Nos.....
.... " " Ten-Cent Hand Books, Nos.....

Name.....Street and No.....Town.....State.....

These Books Tell You Everything!

A COMPLETE SET IS A REGULAR ENCYCLOPEDIA!

Each book consists of sixty-four pages, printed on good paper, in clear type and neatly bound in an attractive, illustrated cover. Most of the books are also profusely illustrated, and all of the subjects treated upon are explained in such a simple manner that any child can thoroughly understand them. Look over the list as classified and see if you want to know anything about the subjects mentioned.

THESE BOOKS ARE FOR SALE BY ALL NEWSDEALERS OR WILL BE SENT BY MAIL TO ANY ADDRESS FROM THIS OFFICE ON RECEIPT OF PRICE, TEN CENTS EACH, OR ANY THREE BOOKS FOR TWENTY-FIVE CENTS. POSTAGE STAMPS TAKEN THE SAME AS MONEY. Address FRANK TOUSEY, Publisher, 24 Union Square, N.Y.

MESMERISM.

No. 81. HOW TO MESMERIZE.—Containing the most approved methods of mesmerism; also how to cure all kinds of diseases by animal magnetism, or, magnetic healing. By Prof. Leo Hugo Koch, A. C. S., author of "How to Hypnotize," etc.

PALMISTRY.

No. 82. HOW TO DO PALMISTRY.—Containing the most approved methods of reading the lines on the hand, together with a full explanation of their meaning. Also explaining phrenology, and the key for telling character by the bumps on the head. By Leo Hugo Koch, A. C. S. Fully illustrated.

HYPNOTISM.

No. 83. HOW TO HYPNOTIZE.—Containing valuable and instructive information regarding the science of hypnotism. Also explaining the most approved methods which are employed by the leading hypnotists of the world. By Leo Hugo Koch, A.C.S.

SPORTING.

No. 21. HOW TO HUNT AND FISH.—The most complete hunting and fishing guide ever published. It contains full instructions about guns, hunting dogs, traps, trapping and fishing, together with descriptions of game and fish.

No. 26. HOW TO ROW, SAIL AND BUILD A BOAT.—Fully illustrated. Every boy should know how to row and sail a boat. Full instructions are given in this little book, together with instructions on swimming and riding, companion sports to boating.

No. 47. HOW TO BREAK, RIDE AND DRIVE A HORSE.—A complete treatise on the horse. Describing the most useful horses for business, the best horses for the road; also valuable recipes for diseases peculiar to the horse.

No. 48. HOW TO BUILD AND SAIL CANOES.—A handy book for boys, containing full directions for constructing canoes and the most popular manner of sailing them. Fully illustrated. By C. Stansfield Hicks.

FORTUNE TELLING.

No. 1. NAPOLEON'S ORACULUM AND DREAM BOOK.—Containing the great oracle of human destiny; also the true meaning of almost any kind of dreams, together with charms, ceremonies, and curious games of cards. A complete book.

No. 23. HOW TO EXPLAIN DREAMS.—Everybody dreams, from the little child to the aged man and woman. This little book gives the explanation to all kinds of dreams, together with lucky and unlucky days, and "Napoleon's Oraculum," the book of fate.

No. 28. HOW TO TELL FORTUNES.—Everyone is desirous of knowing what his future life will bring forth, whether happiness or misery, wealth or poverty. You can tell by a glance at this little book. Buy one and be convinced. Tell your own fortune. Tell the fortune of your friends.

No. 76. HOW TO TELL FORTUNES BY THE HAND.—Containing rules for telling fortunes by the aid of lines of the hand, or the secret of palmistry. Also the secret of telling future events by aid of moles, marks, scars, etc. Illustrated. By A. Anderson.

ATHLETIC.

No. 6. HOW TO BECOME AN ATHLETE.—Giving full instruction for the use of dumb bells, Indian clubs, parallel bars, horizontal bars and various other methods of developing a good, healthy muscle; containing over sixty illustrations. Every boy can become strong and healthy by following the instructions contained in this little book.

No. 10. HOW TO BOX.—The art of self-defense made easy. Containing over thirty illustrations of guards, blows, and the different positions of a good boxer. Every boy should obtain one of these useful and instructive books, as it will teach you how to box without an instructor.

No. 25. HOW TO BECOME A GYMNAST.—Containing full instructions for all kinds of gymnastic sports and athletic exercises. Embracing thirty-five illustrations. By Professor W. Macdonald. A handy and useful book.

No. 34. HOW TO FENCE.—Containing full instruction for fencing and the use of the broadsword; also instruction in archery. Described with twenty-one practical illustrations, giving the best positions in fencing. A complete book.

TRICKS WITH CARDS.

No. 51. HOW TO DO TRICKS WITH CARDS.—Containing explanations of the general principles of sleight-of-hand applicable to card tricks; of card tricks with ordinary cards, and not requiring sleight-of-hand; of tricks involving sleight-of-hand, or the use of specially prepared cards. By Professor Haffner. Illustrated.

No. 72. HOW TO DO SIXTY TRICKS WITH CARDS.—Embracing all of the latest and most deceptive card tricks, with illustrations. By A. Anderson.

No. 77. HOW TO DO FORTY TRICKS WITH CARDS.—Containing deceptive Card Tricks as performed by leading conjurers and magicians. Arranged for home amusement. Fully illustrated.

MAGIC.

No. 2. HOW TO DO TRICKS.—The great book of magic and card tricks, containing full instruction on all the leading card tricks of the day, also the most popular magical illusions as performed by our leading magicians; every boy should obtain a copy of this book, as it will both amuse and instruct.

No. 22. HOW TO DO SECOND SIGHT.—Heller's second sight explained by his former assistant, Fred Hunt, Jr. Explaining how the secret dialogues were carried on between the magician and the boy on the stage; also giving all the codes and signals. The only authentic explanation of second sight.

No. 43. HOW TO BECOME A MAGICIAN.—Containing the grandest assortment of magical illusions ever placed before the public. Also tricks with cards, incantations, etc.

No. 68. HOW TO DO CHEMICAL TRICKS.—Containing over one hundred highly amusing and instructive tricks with chemicals. By A. Anderson. Handsomely illustrated.

No. 69. HOW TO DO SLEIGHT OF HAND.—Containing over fifty of the latest and best tricks used by magicians. Also containing the secret of second sight. Fully illustrated. By A. Anderson.

No. 70. HOW TO MAKE MAGIC TOYS.—Containing full directions for making Magic Toys and devices of many kinds. By A. Anderson. Fully illustrated.

No. 73. HOW TO DO TRICKS WITH NUMBERS.—Showing many curious tricks with figures and the magic of numbers. By A. Anderson. Fully illustrated.

No. 75. HOW TO BECOME A CONJUROR.—Containing tricks with Dominos, Dice, Cups and Balls, Hats, etc. Embracing thirty-six illustrations. By A. Anderson.

No. 78. HOW TO DO THE BLACK ART.—Containing a complete description of the mysteries of Magic and Sleight of Hand, together with many wonderful experiments. By A. Anderson. Illustrated.

MECHANICAL.

No. 29. HOW TO BECOME AN INVENTOR.—Every boy should know how inventions originated. This book explains them all, giving examples in electricity, hydraulics, magnetism, optics, pneumatics, mechanics, etc. The most instructive book published.

No. 56. HOW TO BECOME AN ENGINEER.—Containing full instructions how to proceed in order to become a locomotive engineer; also directions for building a model locomotive; together with a full description of everything an engineer should know.

No. 57. HOW TO MAKE MUSICAL INSTRUMENTS.—Full directions how to make a Banjo, Violin, Zither, Aeolian Harp, Xylophone and other musical instruments; together with a brief description of nearly every musical instrument used in ancient or modern times. Profusely illustrated. By Algernon S. Fitzgerald, for twenty years bandmaster of the Royal Bengal Marines.

No. 59. HOW TO MAKE A MAGIC LANTERN.—Containing a description of the lantern, together with its history and invention. Also full directions for its use and for painting slides. Handsomely illustrated. By John Allen.

No. 71. HOW TO DO MECHANICAL TRICKS.—Containing complete instructions for performing over sixty Mechanical Tricks. By A. Anderson. Fully illustrated.

LETTER WRITING.

No. 11. HOW TO WRITE LOVE-LETTERS.—A most complete little book, containing full directions for writing love-letters, and when to use them, giving specimen letters for young and old.

No. 12. HOW TO WRITE LETTERS TO LADIES.—Giving complete instructions for writing letters to ladies on all subjects; also letters of introduction, notes and requests.

No. 24. HOW TO WRITE LETTERS TO GENTLEMEN.—Containing full directions for writing to gentlemen on all subjects; also giving sample letters for instruction.

No. 53. HOW TO WRITE LETTERS.—A wonderful little book, telling you how to write to your sweetheart, your father, mother, sister, brother, employer; and, in fact, everybody and anybody you wish to write to. Every young man and every young lady in the land should have this book.

No. 74. HOW TO WRITE LETTERS CORRECTLY.—Containing full instructions for writing letters on almost any subject; also rules for punctuation and composition, with specimen letters.

THE STAGE.

No. 41. THE BOYS OF NEW YORK END MEN'S JOKE BOOK.—Containing a great variety of the latest jokes used by the most famous end men. No amateur minstrels is complete without this wonderful little book.

No. 42. THE BOYS OF NEW YORK STUMP SPEAKER.—Containing a varied assortment of stump speeches, Negro, Dutch and Irish. Also end men's jokes. Just the thing for home amusement and amateur shows.

No. 45. THE BOYS OF NEW YORK MINSTREL GUIDE AND JOKE BOOK.—Something new and very instructive. Every boy should obtain this book, as it contains full instructions for organizing an amateur minstrel troupe.

No. 65. MULDOON'S JOKES.—This is one of the most original joke books ever published, and it is brimful of wit and humor. It contains a large collection of songs, jokes, conundrums, etc., of Terrence Muldoon, the great wit, humorist, and practical joker of the day. Every boy who can enjoy a good substantial joke should obtain a copy immediately.

No. 79. HOW TO BECOME AN ACTOR.—Containing complete instructions how to make up for various characters on the stage; together with the duties of the Stage Manager, Prompter, Scenic Artist and Property Man. By a prominent Stage Manager.

No. 80. GUS WILLIAMS' JOKE BOOK.—Containing the latest jokes, anecdotes and funny stories of this world-renowned and ever popular German comedian. Sixty-four pages; handsome colored cover containing a half-tone photo of the author.

HOUSEKEEPING.

No. 16. HOW TO KEEP A WINDOW GARDEN.—Containing full instructions for constructing a window garden either in town or country, and the most approved methods for raising beautiful flowers at home. The most complete book of the kind ever published.

No. 30. HOW TO COOK.—One of the most instructive books on cooking ever published. It contains recipes for cooking meats, fish, game, and oysters; also pies, puddings, cakes and all kinds of pastry, and a grand collection of recipes by one of our most popular cooks.

No. 37. HOW TO KEEP HOUSE.—It contains information for everybody, boys, girls, men and women; it will teach you how to make almost anything around the house, such as parlor ornaments, brackets, cements, Aeolian harps, and bird lime for catching birds.

ELECTRICAL.

No. 46. HOW TO MAKE AND USE ELECTRICITY.—A description of the wonderful uses of electricity and electro magnetism; together with full instructions for making Electric Toys, Batteries, etc. By George Trebel, A. M., M. D. Containing over fifty illustrations.

No. 64. HOW TO MAKE ELECTRICAL MACHINES.—Containing full directions for making electrical machines, induction coils, dynamos, and many novel toys to be worked by electricity. By R. A. R. Bennett. Fully illustrated.

No. 67. HOW TO DO ELECTRICAL TRICKS.—Containing a large collection of instructive and highly amusing electrical tricks, together with illustrations. By A. Anderson.

ENTERTAINMENT.

No. 9. HOW TO BECOME A VENTRILOQUIST.—By Harry Kennedy. The secret given away. Every intelligent boy reading this book of instructions, by a practical professor (delighting multitudes every night with his wonderful imitations), can master the art, and create any amount of fun for himself and friends. It is the greatest book ever published, and there's millions (of fun) in it.

No. 20. HOW TO ENTERTAIN AN EVENING PARTY.—A very valuable little book just published. A complete compendium of games, sports, card diversions, comic recitations, etc., suitable for parlor or drawing-room entertainment. It contains more for the money than any book published.

No. 35. HOW TO PLAY GAMES.—A complete and useful little book, containing the rules and regulations of billiards, bagatelle, backgammon, croquet, dominoes, etc.

No. 36. HOW TO SOLVE CONUNDRUMS.—Containing all the leading conundrums of the day, amusing riddles, curious catches and witty sayings.

No. 52. HOW TO PLAY CARDS.—A complete and handy little book, giving the rules and full directions for playing Euchre, Cribbage, Casino, Forty-Five, Rummy, Pedro Sancho, Draw Poker, Auction Pitch, All Fours, and many other popular games of cards.

No. 66. HOW TO DO PUZZLES.—Containing over three hundred interesting puzzles and conundrums, with key to same. A complete book. Fully illustrated. By A. Anderson.

ETIQUETTE.

No. 13. HOW TO DO IT; OR, BOOK OF ETIQUETTE.—It is a great life secret, and one that every young man desires to know all about. There's happiness in it.

No. 33. HOW TO BEHAVE.—Containing the rules and etiquette of good society and the easiest and most approved methods of appearing to good advantage at parties, balls, the theatre, church, and in the drawing-room.

DECLAMATION.

No. 27. HOW TO RECITE AND BOOK OF RECITATIONS.—Containing the most popular selections in use, comprising Dutch dialect, French dialect, Yankee and Irish dialect pieces, together with many standard readings.

No. 31. HOW TO BECOME A SPEAKER.—Containing fourteen illustrations, giving the different positions requisite to become a good speaker, reader and elocutionist. Also containing gems from all the popular authors of prose and poetry, arranged in the most simple and concise manner possible.

No. 49. HOW TO DEBATE.—Giving rules for conducting debates, outlines for debater, questions for discussion, and the best sources for procuring information on the questions given.

SOCIETY.

No. 3. HOW TO FLIRT.—The arts and wiles of flirtation are fully explained by this little book. Besides the various methods of handkerchief, fan, glove, parasol, window and hat flirtation, it contains a full list of the language and sentiment of flowers, which is interesting to everybody, both old and young. You cannot be happy without one.

No. 4. HOW TO DANCE is the title of a new and handsome little book just issued by Frank Tousey. It contains full instructions in the art of dancing, etiquette in the ball-room and at parties, how to dress, and full directions for calling off in all popular square dances.

No. 5. HOW TO MAKE LOVE.—A complete guide to love, courtship and marriage, giving sensible advice, rules and etiquette to be observed, with many curious and interesting things not generally known.

No. 17. HOW TO DRESS.—Containing full instruction in the art of dressing and appearing well at home and abroad, giving the selections of colors, material, and how to have them made up.

No. 18. HOW TO BECOME BEAUTIFUL.—One of the brightest and most valuable little books ever given to the world. Everybody wishes to know how to become beautiful, both male and female. The secret is simple, and almost costless. Read this book and be convinced how to become beautiful.

BIRDS AND ANIMALS.

No. 7. HOW TO KEEP BIRDS.—Handsomely illustrated and containing full instructions for the management and training of the canary, mockingbird, bobolink, blackbird, paroquet, parrot, etc.

No. 39. HOW TO RAISE DOGS, POULTRY, PIGEONS AND RABBITS.—A useful and instructive book. Handsomely illustrated. By Ira Drowar.

No. 40. HOW TO MAKE AND SET TRAPS.—Including hints on how to catch moles, weasels, otter, rats, squirrels and birds. Also how to cure skins. Copiously illustrated. By J. Harrington Keene.

No. 50. HOW TO STUFF BIRDS AND ANIMALS.—A valuable book, giving instructions in collecting, preparing, mounting and preserving birds, animals and insects.

No. 54. HOW TO KEEP AND MANAGE PETS.—Giving complete information as to the manner and method of raising, keeping, taming, breeding, and managing all kinds of pets; also giving full instructions for making cages, etc. Fully explained by twenty-eight illustrations, making it the most complete book of the kind ever published.

MISCELLANEOUS.

No. 8. HOW TO BECOME A SCIENTIST.—A useful and instructive book, giving a complete treatise on chemistry; also experiments in acoustics, mechanics, mathematics, chemistry, and directions for making fireworks, colored fires, and gas balloons. This book cannot be equaled.

No. 14. HOW TO MAKE CANDY.—A complete hand-book for making all kinds of candy, ice-cream, syrups, essences, etc., etc.

No. 84. HOW TO BECOME AN AUTHOR.—Containing full information regarding choice of subjects, the use of words and the manner of preparing and submitting manuscript. Also containing valuable information as to the neatness, legibility and general composition of manuscript, essential to a successful author. By Prince Hiland.

No. 38. HOW TO BECOME YOUR OWN DOCTOR.—A wonderful book, containing useful and practical information in the treatment of ordinary diseases and ailments common to every family. Abounding in useful and effective recipes for general complaints.

No. 55. HOW TO COLLECT STAMPS AND COINS.—Containing valuable information regarding the collecting and arranging of stamps and coins. Handsomely illustrated.

No. 58. HOW TO BE A DETECTIVE.—By Old King Brady, the world-known detective. In which he lays down some valuable and sensible rules for beginners, and also relates some adventures and experiences of well-known detectives.

No. 60. HOW TO BECOME A PHOTOGRAPHER.—Containing useful information regarding the Camera and how to work it; also how to make Photographic Magic Lantern Slides and other Transparencies. Handsomely illustrated. By Captain W. De W. Abney.

No. 62. HOW TO BECOME A WEST POINT MILITARY CADET.—Containing full explanations how to gain admittance, course of Study, Examinations, Duties, Staff of Officers, Post Guard, Police Regulations, Fire Department, and all a boy should know to be a Cadet. Compiled and written by Lu Senarens, author of "How to Become a Naval Cadet."

No. 63. HOW TO BECOME A NAVAL CADET.—Complete instructions of how to gain admission to the Annapolis Naval Academy. Also containing the course of instruction, description of grounds and buildings, historical sketch, and everything a boy should know to become an officer in the United States Navy. Compiled and written by Lu Senarens, author of "How to Become a West Point Military Cadet."

PRICE 10 CENTS EACH, OR 3 FOR 25 CENTS.

Address FRANK TOUSEY, Publisher, 24 Union Square, New York.

Fame and Fortune Weekly

STORIES OF BOYS WHO MAKE MONEY

By A SELF-MADE MAN

32 Pages of Reading Matter

: :

Handsome Colored Covers

A new one issued every Friday

Price 5 cents a copy

This Weekly contains interesting stories of smart boys, who win fame and fortune by their ability to take advantage of passing opportunities. Some of these stories are founded on true incidents in the lives of our most successful self-made men, and show how a boy of pluck, perseverance and brains can become famous and wealthy. Every one of this series contains a good moral tone which makes "Fame and Fortune Weekly" a magazine for the home, although each number is replete with exciting adventures. The stories are the very best obtainable, the illustrations are by expert artists, and every effort is constantly being made to make it the best weekly on the news stands. Tell your friends about it.

ALREADY PUBLISHED.

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1 A Lucky Deal; or, The Cutest Boy in Wall Street. | 33 Playing to Win; or, The Foxiest Boy in Wall Street. |
| 2 Born to Good Luck; or, The Boy Who Succeeded. | 34 Tatters; or, A Boy from the Slums. |
| 3 A Corner in Corn; or, How a Chicago Boy Did the Trick. | 35 A Young Monte Cristo; or, The Richest Boy in the World. |
| 4 A Game of Chance; or, The Boy Who Won Out. | 36 Won by Pluck; or, The Boys Who Ran a Railroad. |
| 5 Hard to Beat; or, The Cleverest Boy in Wall Street. | 37 Beating the Brokers; or, The Boy Who "Couldn't be Done." |
| 6 Building a Railroad; or, The Young Contractors of Lakeview. | 38 A Rolling Stone; or, The Brightest Boy on Record. |
| 7 Winning His Way; or, The Youngest Editor in Green River. | 39 Never Say Die; or, The Young Surveyor of Happy Valley. |
| 8 The Wheel of Fortune; or, The Record of a Self-Made Boy. | 40 Almost a Man; or, Winning His Way to the Top. |
| 9 Nip and Tuck; or, The Young Brokers of Wall Street. | 41 Boss of the Market; or, The Greatest Boy in Wall Street. |
| 10 A Copper Harvest; or, The Boys Who Worked a Deserted Mine. | 42 The Chance of His Life; or, The Young Pilot of Crystal Lake. |
| 11 A Lucky Penny; or, The Fortunes of a Boston Boy. | 43 Striving for Fortune; or, From Bell-Boy to Millionaire. |
| 12 A Diamond in the Rough; or, A Brave Boy's Start in Life. | 44 Out for Business; or, The Smartest Boy in Town. |
| 13 Baiting the Bears; or, The Nerviest Boy in Wall Street. | 45 A Favorite of Fortune; or, Striking It Rich in Wall Street. |
| 14 A Gold Brick; or, The Boy Who Could Not be Downed. | 46 Through Thick and Thin; or, The Adventures of a Smart Boy. |
| 15 A Streak of Luck; or, The Boy Who Feathered His Nest. | 47 Doing His Level Best; or, Working His Way Up. |
| 16 A Good Thing; or, The Boy Who Made a Fortune. | 48 Always on Deck; or, The Boy Who Made His Mark. |
| 17 King of the Market; or, The Young Trader in Wall Street. | 49 A Mint of Money; or, The Young Wall Street Broker. |
| 18 Pure Grit; or, One Boy in a Thousand. | 50 The Ladder of Fame; or, From Office Boy to Senator. |
| 19 A Rise in Life; or, The Career of a Factory Boy. | 51 On the Square; or, The Success of an Honest Boy. |
| 20 A Barrel of Money; or, A Bright Boy in Wall Street. | 52 After a Fortune; or, The Pluckiest Boy in the West. |
| 21 All to the Good; or, From Call Boy to Manager. | 53 Winning the Dollars; or, The Young Wonder of Wall Street. |
| 22 How He Got There; or, The Pluckiest Boy of Them All. | 54 Making His Mark; or, The Boy Who Became President. |
| 23 Bound to Win; or, The Boy Who Got Rich. | 55 Heir to a Million; or, The Boy Who Was Born Lucky. |
| 24 Pushing It Through; or, The Fate of a Lucky Boy. | 56 Lost in the Andes; or, The Treasure of the Buried City. |
| 25 A Born Speculator; or, The Young Sphinx of Wall Street. | 57 On His Mettle; or, A Plucky Boy in Wall Street. |
| 26 The Way to Success; or, The Boy Who Got There. | 58 A Lucky Chance; or, Taking Fortune on the Wing. |
| 27 Struck Oil; or, The Boy Who Made a Million. | 59 The Road to Success; or, The Career of a Fortunate Boy. |
| 28 A Golden Risk; or, The Young Miners of Della Cruz. | 60 Chasing Pointers; or, The Luckiest Boy in Wall Street. |
| 29 A Sure Winner; or, The Boy Who Went Out With a Circus. | 61 Rising in the World; or, From Factory Boy to Manager. |
| 30 Golden Fleece; or, The Boy Brokers of Wall Street. | 62 From Dark to Dawn; or, A Poor Boy's Chance. |
| 31 A Mad Cap Scheme; or, The Boy Treasure Hunters of Cocos Island. | |
| 32 Adrift on the World; or, Working His Way to Fortune. | |

For sale by all newsdealers, or will be sent to any address on receipt of price, 5 cents per copy, in money or postage stamps, by

FRANK TOUSEY, Publisher,

24 Union Square, New York.

IF YOU WANT ANY BACK NUMBERS

of our Libraries and cannot procure them from newsdealers, they can be obtained from this office direct. Cut out and fill in the following Order Blank and send it to us with the price of the books you want and we will send them to you by return mail.

POSTAGE STAMPS TAKEN THE SAME AS MONEY.

.....
FRANK TOUSEY, Publisher, 24 Union Square, New York.

.....190

DEAR SIR—Enclosed find.....cents for which please send me:

....copies of WORK AND WIN, Nos.....
.... " " WIDE AWAKE WEEKLY, Nos.....
.... " " WILD WEST WEEKLY, Nos.....
.... " " THE LIBERTY BOYS OF '76, Nos.....
.... " " PLUCK AND LUCK, Nos.....
.... " " SECRET SERVICE, Nos.....
.... " " FAME AND FORTUNE WEEKLY, Nos.....
.... " " Ten-Cent Hand Books, Nos.....

Name.....Street and No.....Town.....State.....

WIDE AWAKE WEEKLY

A COMPLETE STORY EVERY WEEK

Price 5 Cents

BY THE BEST AUTHORS

Price 5 Cents

HANDSOME ILLUSTRATED COVERS

32-PAGES OF READING MATTER

ISSUED EVERY FRIDAY

Interesting Stories of Adventure in All Parts of the World

TAKE NOTICE!

This handsome weekly contains intensely interesting stories of adventure on a great variety of subjects. Each number is replete with rousing situations and lively incidents. The heroes are bright, manly fellows, who overcome all obstacles by sheer force of brains and grit and win well-merited success. We have secured a staff of new authors, who write these stories in a manner which will be a source of pleasure and profit to the reader. Each number has a handsome colored illustration made by the most expert artists. Large sums of money are being spent to make this one of the best weeklies ever published.

.....Here is a List of Some of the Titles.....

- 1 Smashing the Auto Record; or, Bart Wilson at the Speed Lever. By Edward N. Fox.
- 2 Off the Ticker; or, Fate at a Moment's Notice. By Tom Dawson.
- 3 From Cadet to Captain; or, Dick Danford's West Point Nerve. By Lieut. J. J. Barry.
- 4 The Get-There Boys; or, Making Things Hum in Honduras. By Fred Warburton.
- 5 Written in Cipher; or, The Skein Jack Barry Unravelled. By Prof. Oliver Owens.
- 6 The No-Good Boys; or, Downing a Tough Name. By A. Howard De Witt.
- 7 Kicked off the Earth; or, Ted Trim's Hard Luck Cure. By Rob Roy.
- 8 Doing it Quick; or, Ike Brown's Hustle at Panama. By Captain Hawthorn, U. S. N.
- 9 In the 'Frisco Earthquake; or, Bob Brag's Day of Terror. By Prof. Oliver Owens.
- 10 We, Us & Co.; or, Seeing Life with a Vaudeville Show. By Edward N. Fox.
- 11 Cut Out for an Officer; or, Corporal Ted in the Philippines. By Lieut. J. J. Barry.
- 12 A Fool for Luck; or, The Boy Who Turned Boss. By Fred Warburton.
- 13 The Great Gaul "Beat"; or, Phil Winston's Start in Reporting. By A. Howard De Witt.
- 14 Out for Gold; or, The Boy Who Knew the Difference. By Tom Dawson.
- 15 The Boy Who Balked; or, Bob Brisbane's Big Kick. By Frank Irving.
- 16 Slicker than Silk; or, The Smoothest Boy Alive. By Rob Roy.
- 17 The Keg of Diamonds; or, After the Treasure of the Caliphs. By Tom Dawson.
- 18 Sandow, Junior; or, The Boy Who Looked Puny. By Prof. Oliver Owens.
- 19 Won by Bluff; or, Jack Mason's Marble Face. By Frank Irving.
- 20 On the Lobster Shift; or, The Herald's Star Reporter. By A. Howard De Witt.
- 21 Under the Vendetta's Steel; or, A Yankee Boy in Corsica. By Lieut. J. J. Barry.
- 22 Too Green to Burn; or, The Luck of Being a Boy. By Rob Roy.
- 23 In Fool's Paradise; or, The Boy Who Had Things Easy. By Fred Warburton.
- 24 One Boy in a Million; or, The Trick That Paid. By Edward N. Fox.
- 25 In Spite of Himself; or, Serving the Russian Police. By Prof. Oliver Owens.
- 26 Kicked into Luck; or, The Way Nate Got There. By Rob Roy.
- 27 The Prince of Opals; or, The Man-Trap of Death Valley. By A. Howard De Witt.
- 28 Living in His Hat; or, The Wide World His Home. By Edward N. Fox.
- 29 All for President Diaz; or, A Hot Time in Mexico. By Lieut. J. J. Barry.
- 30 The Easiest Ever; or, How Tom Filled a Money Barrel. By Capt. Hawthorn, U. S. N.

For sale by all newsdealers, or will be sent to any address on receipt of price, 5 cents per copy, in money or postage stamps, by
FRANK TOUSEY, Publisher, **24 Union Square, New York.**

IF YOU WANT ANY BACK NUMBERS

of our libraries, and cannot procure them from newsdealers, they can be obtained from this office direct. Cut out and fill in the following Order Blank and send it to us with the price of the books you want and we will send them to you by return mail.

POSTAGE STAMPS TAKEN THE SAME AS MONEY.

FRANK TOUSEY, Publisher, 24 Union Square, New York.190

DEAR SIR—Enclosed find..... cents for which please send me:

.... copies of FAME AND FORTUNE WEEKLY, Nos.....
.... " " WIDE AWAKE WEEKLY, Nos.....
.... " " WORK AND WIN. Nos.....
.... " " WILD WEST WEEKLY, Nos.....
.... " " PLUCK AND LUCK, Nos.....
.... " " SECRET SERVICE, Nos.....
.... " " THE LIBERTY BOYS OF '76, Nos.....
.... " " Ten-Cent Hand Books, Nos.....

Name.....Street and No.....Town.....State.....